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VICE-REGAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS, INCLUDING
LIGHT RAILWAYS.

APPENDIX

TO THE

THIRD REPORT.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

(Taken in Dublin and in London, 11th October to 16th November, 1907, inclusive)

AND

DOCUMENTS RELATING THERETO.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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VICE-REGAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Sir Charles Scott, Bart. (Chairman)

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Sir Herbert Jekyll, K.C.M.G.

Colonel W. Hutchinson Poo, C.B.

Thomas Sexton, Esq.

William Mitchell Asquith, Esq.

John Audley Frederick Aspinall, Esq.

Secretary--

GEORGE EDMUND SHANAHAN, Esq.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

"To inquire into the present working of Railways in Ireland, including Light Railways, and to report how far they afford, separately or in conjunction with other means of transit, adequate facilities for the cheap and rapid transport of goods and passengers within the Island and to Great Britain; what causes have retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines and their full utilisation for the development of the agricultural and industrial resources of the country; and, generally, by what methods the economical, efficient and harmonious working of the Irish Railways can be best secured."

VICE-REGAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

DRAFT HEADS OF EVIDENCE FOR TRADERS, INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS, COMMERCIAL
AND PUBLIC BODIES, &c., ISSUED BY THE COMMISSION IN OCTOBER, 1866.

I.—BROAD GAUGE RAILWAYS.

1. The trade or industry represented.
2. The districts affected and the railways, and the other means of transit concerned.
3. Nature of complaints as to existing facilities—
 - (a.) Local goods, mineral, and live stock rates, and their effect, generally, on trade and the development of industries.
 - (b.) Through rates for goods and live stock, and their effect, generally, on trade and agriculture in Ireland.
 - (c.) Passenger fares, ordinary, special, and excursion, whether reasonable or excessive.
 - (d.) Whether reductions in the existing rates and fares would be likely to produce eventually a remunerative growth of traffic.
 - (e.) Train service—(1) Passenger; locally on the lines serving the district, and through trains connecting with the systems of other companies; whether the service is efficient in respect of speed; whether the accommodation is satisfactory; the number of trains sufficient for the traffic, and if the through connections are convenient and suitable. (2) Goods and cattle: whether the service is sufficient and suitable and worked with reasonable expedition.
 - (f.) Combined services, e.g., train and car, train and steamer: whether such services have been worked in the district and with what results, or if not, whether services of this nature, if introduced, would be beneficial.
 - (g.) Canals and waterways: whether any existing waterway in the district is worked in conjunction with a railway system so as to give the full benefit of the double means of communication to the public, or whether, in effect, it is worked to the disadvantage of traders from a competitive point of view; if the latter, what quantity of agricultural and other produce and general goods (approximately) at present conveyed by rail could be advantageously carried by water.
 - (h.) Whether there is any evidence of undue preference in respect of rates or facilities.
4. The management of Irish railways: whether this is regarded as satisfactory or otherwise; if unsatisfactory, in what respects has it adversely affected the development of the resources of the country, agricultural and industrial, and to what extent has it retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines.
5. What suggestions are offered that would be conducive to better management and more effective service, with a view to the proper development of the resources of the country:—
 - (a.) By way of reduced rates and fares, and the payment of a subsidy to the Companies for a period.
 - (b.) By increasing the number of trains in such districts as at present suffer from an inefficient service, and the re-employment to the Companies concerned of the whole, or a portion, of the extra cost.
 - (c.) By the establishment of goods and passenger motor services in districts at present without railway communication, to be worked in conjunction with the Irish Railways, subject to satisfactory arrangements as to the extra cost of maintenance of roads.
 - (d.) By the voluntary or compulsory amalgamation of the Irish railways, and the formation of two or three important systems.
 - (e.) By the nationalisation of all the Irish railways, by way of State purchase or otherwise.
6. Whether the right of appeal to the Board of Trade on certain questions, and the appeal to the Railway and Canal Commissioners as to excessive rates, and, generally, as to unsuitable or improper traffic conditions or arrangements at present open to traders is regarded as satisfactory.
7. Whether the powers given to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction by Sections 17 and 36 of the Act of 1899 (62 and 63 Vic., cap. 50) have been to any extent beneficial to traders and others having complaints against the Irish Railway Companies—particularly as regards Section 17, which enables the Department to take steps for complaining on behalf of any person aggrieved by undue preference, unfair rates, or any matter which the Railway and Canal Commissioners have jurisdiction to determine.
8. Whether there is any other question that might be usefully considered in determining the causes that have retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines, and their full utilisation for the development of the agricultural and industrial resources of the country.

II.—LIGHT RAILWAYS

1. The trade or industry represented,

2. The districts affected and the railways, and the other means of transit concerned,

3. Nature of complaints as to existing transit facilities:—

(a.) Local goods, mineral, and live stock rates, and their effect, generally, on trade and the development of industries;

(b.) Through rates for goods and live stock, and their effect, generally, on trade and agriculture in Ireland.

(c.) Passenger fares ordinary, special, and excursion, whether reasonable or excessive.

(d.) Whether reductions in the existing rates and fares would be likely to produce eventually a remunerative growth of traffic.

(e.) Train service:—(1) Passenger, locally on the lines serving the district, and through trains connecting with the systems of other companies, whether the service is efficient in respect of speed; whether the accommodation is satisfactory; the number of trains sufficient for the traffic, and if the through connections are convenient and suitable. (2) Goods and cattle, whether the service is sufficient and suitable and worked with reasonable expedition.

(f.) Combined services, e.g., train and car, train and steamer: whether such services have been worked in the district and with what results, or if not, whether services of this nature, if introduced, would be beneficial.

(g.) Canals and waterways: whether any existing waterway in the district is worked in conjunction with a railway system so as to give the full benefit of the double means of communication to the public, or whether, in effect, it is worked to the disadvantage of traders from a competitive point of view; if the latter, what quantity of agricultural and other produce and general goods (approximately) at present conveyed by rail could be advantageously carried by water.

(h.) Whether there is any evidence of undue preference in respect of rates or facilities.

4. The management of Irish Light Railways, whether this is regarded as satisfactory or otherwise, if unsatisfactory, in what respects has it adversely

affected the development of the resources, agricultural and industrial, of the districts served by those lines, and to what extent has it retarded the expansion of traffic.

5. What suggestions are offered that would be conducive to better management and more effective service, with a view to the proper development of the resources of these districts, and having regard to the object for which the lines were constructed:—

(a.) By way of reduced rates and fares, and, in the case of non-guaranteed lines of the payment of a subsidy to the Companies for a period.

(b.) By increasing the number of trains in such districts as at present suffer from an insufficient service, and the recompense to the Companies concerned of the whole, or a portion, of the extra cost.

(c.) By the establishment of goods and passenger motor services in districts adjacent to, but not directly served by, these lines, to be worked in conjunction with the light railways, subject to satisfactory arrangements as to the extra cost of maintenance of roads.

(d.) By amalgamation with other light railways, where possible.

6. Whether the right of appeal to the Board of Trade on certain questions, and the appeal to the Railway and Canal Commissioners as to excessive rates, and, generally, as to unsuitable or improper traffic conditions or arrangements at present open to traders is regarded as satisfactory.

7. Whether the powers given to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction by Sections 17 and 30 of the Act of 1899 (52 and 53 Vic., cap. 50) have been to any extent beneficial to traders and others having complaints against the Irish Railway Companies, particularly as regards Section 17, which enables the Department to take steps for complaining on behalf of any person aggrieved by undue preference, unfair rates, or any matter which the Railway and Canal Commissioners have jurisdiction to determine.

8. Whether there is any other question that might be usefully considered in determining the causes that have retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines, and their full utilisation for the development of the agricultural and industrial resources of the country.

VICE-REGAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.—VOLUME III.

LIST OF WITNESSES (18).

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Ahern, Mr. Michael, J. P.	Chairman, Committee of Management, Drogheda-Tulskinn Light Railway.	Fifty-sixth.	Nov. 24th, 1907.	14725-14730 14731-14735	551-555	—	—
And, Mr. James, J. P.	Mayborough Town Commissioners.	Sixty-second.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15124-15125	556-555	—	—
Anderson, Mr. Joseph,	Ormeau Urban District Council and Chamber of Commerce.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 25th, 1907.	15131-15135	559-563	—	—
Armstrong, Mr. George A., J. P.	Engineer, Dublin-Cork, Drogheda, and Waterbury Railway.	Fifty-seventh.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15173-15182	572-575	—	—
Bell, Mr. George de Belle,	Drogheda Development Association, Ltd.	Sixtieth.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	15155-15157	567-568	—	—
Bennet, Mr. H. H.,	Black Horse & Sons, Limerick.	Fifty-first.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15081-15122	551-577	20	478
Byrne, Mr. James, J. P.	Cork City Council.	Fifty-ninth.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	15099-15117	555-565	—	—
Cady, Mr. Timothy, J. P.	Cork County Council.	Sixty-first.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	15080-15181	555-569	—	—
Chambers, Mr. R. O'Neill, J. P.	County Surveyor, Limerick.	Fiftieth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15075-15076	554-555	16	479
Cox, Mr. W. C. D.,	General Manager, Dublin-Cork, Drogheda, and Waterbury Railway.	Fifty-seventh.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15080-15173	555-575	—	—
Collins, Mr. John,	Stratton Normal Association.	Fiftieth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15068-15067	553-552	18	481
Collins, Mr. James,	Brooklands Chamber of Commerce.	Fifty-eighth.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	15127-15132	564-569	—	—
Coltman, Mr. George H. J. P.	Yas. Coleman, Cork and Malin Light Railway.	Sixty-first.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15147-15159	568-578	27	487
Conlon, Mr. Patrick,	Food Importers, Curragh-on-Sue.	Fifty-ninth.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15100-15101	571-572	—	—
Condon, Mr. J. J.,	Celtic Tractor, Killybeg.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15054-15055	55-56	—	—
Condon, Mr. R. O. J. P.	Derry County Council.	Fifty-first.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15051-15052	55-56	—	—
Cook, Mr. James,	Wheat Cuts & Sons, Soap Manufacturers, Dublin.	Forty-ninth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15053-15054 15055-15056	56-57 57	—	—
Dolan, Mr. C. J. J. P.	Limerick County Council.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15049-15049	55-56	—	—
Doran, Mr. J. W. J. P.	Kinnel, co. Cork.	Fifty-fourth.	Oct. 24th, 1907.	15035-15036	55-56	—	—
Doran, Mr. R. H. J. P.	County Surveyor, Armagh.	Forty-seventh.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	15036-15045	57-66	—	—
Dowdell, Mr. J. P.	Westmeath County Council.	Sixty-first.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15113-15114	569-570	—	—
Drake, Mr. William,	Dublin City Council.	Fifty-fourth.	Oct. 24th, 1907.	15044-15048	57-61	—	—
Evans, Mr. Richard, J. P.	Engineer, South and Galway Light Railway.	Fifty-eighth.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15107-15108	574-575	30	488
Foley, Mr. Y. B.,	Water Clerk, Wicklow.	Fiftieth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15077-15078	565-566	—	—
Fitzpatrick, Mr. P.,	Secret of Ireland Office Trade Association, Cork.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15071-15072 15073-15074	568-570 571-572	—	—
Gibson, Mr. S. G., J. P.	County Surveyor, Wicklow.	Forty-eighth.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15075-15076	572-573	—	—
Gibson, Mr. George, J. P.	Donaghadee Urban District Council.	Forty-seventh.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	15073-15075	57-59	15 & 16	485-5
Giles, Mr. Joseph A., J. P.	Chairman, Galway County Council, and Member Irish County Councils (General Council).	Forty-seventh.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	15071-15077	57-63	—	—
Goodbody, Mr. R. J. P.	Member J. L. & F. Goodbody, Clerks.	Fifty-first.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15080-15080	574-575	—	—
Gray, Rev. D. J. P.	Limerick County Council.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15075-15076	57-58	2-4	481
Gray, Rev. W. J. P.	Member of the General District Council, and Chief Inspector of Fisheries for the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.	Fifty-ninth.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15074-15075	587-588	—	—
Gray, Mr. Robert,	Dublin City Council.	Fifty-fourth.	Oct. 24th, 1907.	15046-15047	575-576	—	—
Gray, Mr. T. E., J. P.	Kinnel, co. Cork.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 18th, 1907.	15075-15076	574-575	—	—
Harman, Mr. C. W.	Dublin City Council.	Sixty-second.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15127-15128	584-585	—	—
Hartley, Mr. S. G. J. P.	Manager, Drogheda, East Drogheda, and Drogheda Railway Company.	Fifty-eighth.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15113-15114	569-570	—	—
Hartley, Mr. W. J. P.	Drogheda Chamber of Commerce.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 25th, 1907.	15131-15132	559-560	—	—
Hartley, Mr. John, J. P.	County Surveyor, Limerick.	Forty-ninth.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	15075-15076	574-575	—	—
Johnston, Mr. James W. J. P.	Fermagh County Council.	Fifty-fifth.	Oct. 16th, 1907.	15071-15072	570-571	—	—
Kenna, Mr. James,	Wicklow, Dublin, Representative of Queens to County Council.	Fifty-seventh.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	15077-15078	574-575	—	—
King, Mr. T. A. J. P.	Manager, Dublin Dock and Fish Works.	Sixty-eighth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	15081-15082	577-578	—	—
Kirby, Mr. Patrick,	Food Importers, Curragh-on-Sue.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 25th, 1907.	15113-15114	569-570	22	477
Lalor, Mr. Thomas, J. P.	Cork Urban District Council.	Sixty-first.	Nov. 15th, 1907.	15075-15076	574-575	—	—

Name.	Description.	Day.	Date.	Evidence.		Appendix.	
				Question.	Page.	No.	Page.
Living, Mr. Robert W.	Railway Report, re-General Managers and Engineers, General Railway, Charleston, Railway Harbor Commission.	Fifty-second.	Nov. 13th, 1907.	2405-2506	264-272	5	453-4
Lynch, Mr. Marcus J. R.	General Manager, Baltimore and Annapolis Railway.	Fifty-second.	Oct. 19th, 1907.	2506-2578	175-179	—	—
McCarthy, Mr. T.	General Manager, Baltimore and Annapolis Railway.	Fifty-second.	Nov. 13th, 1907.	2578-2610	280-289	—	—
McConnell, Mr. John.	Secretary, Board of Guardians and Rural District Council.	Fifty-second.	Oct. 28th, 1907.	2610-2624	216-224	—	—
McCreary, Mr. S. W. J. F.	Landward County Council.	Early first.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2624-2628	241-243	—	—
McGowan, Mr. R. O.	Ardsley County Council.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2628-2670	32-34	—	—
McGowan, Mr. James.	Northwards Urban District Council.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 23rd, 1907.	2670-2684	226-234	—	—
McGowan, Mr. Thomas.	Mayor, High and Benn Fisheries, London.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2684-2694	79-83	15	464
McLaughlin, Mr. F.	General Board of Guardians.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 21st, 1907.	2694-2707	790-800	—	—
McNair, Mr. Michael J. F.	Ardsley Railway Committee.	Ardsley.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2707-2712	138-140	—	—
MacNair, Mr. Philip.	Technical Inspector, Department of Agriculture and Technical Education.	Fifty-third.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2712-2713	246-253	—	—
MacNair, Mr. J. J.	Solicitor, Dublin.	Fifty-second.	Oct. 19th, 1907.	2713-2714	170-179	—	—
Macdonald, Mr. F. J.	Cardiff Urban District Council.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2714-2715	86-88	—	—
Martin, Mr. Michael.	Belfastshire Co. London Road District Council.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	2715-2716	145-147	—	—
Mason, Mr. J. W.	London County Council.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	2716-2717	8-32	9	452
Moore, Mr. William D.	Chairman, Dublin and Howth Road Tramway Company.	Fifty-second.	Nov. 11th, 1907.	2717-2718	226-232	—	—
Morris, Mr. James.	Former, Glasgow, Co. Kent.	Fifty-second.	Oct. 28th, 1907.	2718-2719	229-231	35	455
Nagle, Mr. H. J.	South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association, Cork.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2719-2720	104-109	30	453
O'Boyle, Mr. James.	Teacher, Killea, Co. Mayo.	Fifty-third.	Nov. 13th, 1907.	2720-2721	239-246	—	—
O'Donnell, Mr. George.	Dist. County Council.	Early first.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2721-2722	339-342	—	—
O'Donnell, Mr. Y.	Secretary, Cork and Muskerry Railway, and Incorporated Railway Light Railway.	Fifty-third.	Nov. 13th, 1907.	2722-2723	318	27	457
O'Donnell, Mr. James.	President, Dublin and Under Vint.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	2723-2724	93-96	—	—
O'Donnell, Mr. F. J.	Kilrush Urban District Council.	Forty-second.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2724-2725	246-276	—	—
O'Donnell, Mr. J.	Blackstone Road District Council.	Forty-second.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2725-2726	371-375	—	—
O'Donnell, Rev. H.	President, St. Columba's College, Ferry.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 21st, 1907.	2726-2727	189-193	—	—
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O'Donnell, Mr. P. K.	Cattle Dealer, Cork.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2728-2729	26-42	—	—
O'Donnell, Mr. W. J.	President, Cork and South of Ireland (General) Railway Association.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	2729-2730	167-169	—	—
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Proctor, Mr. S. P.	Irish Commercial Travellers' Association.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2733-2734	45-55	—	—
Railway, Mr. Hugh.	Belfastshire Urban District Council.	Forty-third.	Oct. 19th, 1907.	2734-2735	35-37	—	—
Rogers, Mr. Edward.	Chairman, Committee of Management, School and Belfastshire Light Railway.	Fifty-third.	Nov. 13th, 1907.	2735-2736	245-246	38	453
Saunders, Mr. J. H.	Managing Director, Longwood Quarry, Dublin.	Forty-sixth.	Oct. 15th, 1907.	2736-2737	218-219	—	—
Smith, Mr. William.	Chairman, Co-operative Society.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	2737-2738	157-160	33	457
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Studdy, Mr. William.	South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association, Cork.	Forty-second.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2739-2740	267-269	—	—
Ston, Mr. T. F. S. P.	Midland Road District Council.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	2740-2741	135-136	—	—
Swain, Mr. J. H. K.	Ardsley Railway Committee.	Ardsley.	Nov. 14th, 1907.	2741-2742	240	—	—
Thompson, Mr. Edward.	General.	Fifty-third.	Oct. 17th, 1907.	2742-2743	180-182	4	458
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Thorn, Mr. H. G.	Secretary, Dublin and Howth Road Tramway Company.	Fifty-third.	Nov. 13th, 1907.	2744-2745	245-246	—	—
Wells, Mr. C.	Secretary, Dublin Railway Co.	Forty-second.	Oct. 14th, 1907.	2745-2746	179-182	—	—
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Mr. T. O'CONNOR.

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Mr. PATRICK CORLESS.

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Mr. JAMES BYRNE, J.P.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FORTY-FIFTH PUBLIC SITTING—FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11th, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART. Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FISKE, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JEKYLL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHERSON FOR, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Oct. 11, 1907.

Chairman.—Before we commence, may I say that the Commission, and everyone here, I am sure, are glad to see Mr. Tallow back, and we congratulate him on what we hope is his complete recovery.

Rev. D. GRAY, P.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Rev. D. Gray, P.P., representative of the Leitrim County Council.

26383. I think you appear on behalf of the Leitrim County Council?—Yes.

26384. Have you been deputed by the County Council to appear here?—Yes.

26385. We may take it that the evidence which you propose to give is the evidence which the Council collectively would give?—Yes.

26386. Is there much dissent in the Council as to the points about which you wish to speak?—No.

26387. The Council are pretty unanimous in the views which you wish to express?—They are.

26388. Is there any other association that you represent?—I represent the Ratepayers' Protection Association of South Leitrim.

26389. You wish to give evidence more particularly with reference to the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway?—Yes.

26390. Do you live in the district?—Practically in the centre of the district.

26391. Where do you live?—At Fenagh. My parish is the parish of Fenagh, in the centre of the guaranteeing area.

26392. I may take it you are thoroughly acquainted with the position and working of that particular railway?—Yes. I have been pretty well made up on all the points.

26393. Give us a brief description of the railway and its connections?—It is a narrow-gauge railway from Drogheda to Bellefleur, and it is a main line from Bellefleur to Drumshambo and on to Arigna, where it terminates about three miles from the Arigna coal pits.

26394. How was the capital raised for working the railway? Was there a guarantee given?—There was a guarantee given of five per cent. on the paid-up capital required for the construction of the line.

26395. Who gave the guarantee?—The ratepayers within a radius of about five miles around gave the guarantee, and the Government were responsible for two per cent. if there was a deficit.

26396. The railway itself, I think, is divided into two undertakings?—Yes.

26397. What is the first one?—The Cavan and Leitrim. With the Cavan undertaking of course I have no concern, because I don't represent that district. I represent the ratepayers of the County Leitrim.

26398. Take the County Leitrim, the section number 2 in your prices, the Leitrim section: what was the capital expended on that?—The paid-up capital of the two sections was £168,000.

26399. What is the proportion of the Leitrim Section?—The proportion is about two-thirds.

26400. Is it £115,000?—Yes.

26401. I suppose the ratepayers agreed to guarantee a certain amount of interest upon that capital upon a prospectus that was prepared by the promoters?

Yes. They consented, and gave their signatures upon conditions laid down by the promoters and the grand jury.

26402. And I suppose that the ratepayers thought that the estimates made by the promoters would be realised?—They considered that they should be realised, but it was not so much upon the estimates that they depended when giving the guarantee as upon the conditions that were put before them. They were told:—"If you give a guarantee of five per cent. on the paid-up share capital we will undertake to give you a majority on the directors of the line." The Grand Jury of Leitrim promised them that. A pamphlet was written and sent out broadcast by the promoters, which told them this; and at every meeting that was convened to promote the undertaking they were told this, and they said: "All right, if you give us a working majority we will give you a guarantee of five per cent. upon it."

26403. Do you remember what the estimate of receipts was per mile per week?—£6.

26404. That was the original estimate?—Yes.

26405. What is the actual result now?—£4 8s. 4d. per mile per week gross receipts.

26406. Do you know anything about expenses?—Yes. The expenses are a little over 23 per cent. of the gross receipts.

26407. That £4 8s. 4d. per mile per week is the result after eighteen years' working?—Nineteen years' working.

26408. How many counties does this particular railway touch?—Three counties.

26409. It runs through three counties?—Yes, Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon.

26410. Does the loss fall upon the whole of those counties?—No loss falls on the County Roscommon at all. They declined to give any guarantee. There was a personal guarantee given by Lord Kingston. That was faithfully observed during his lifetime. On his death it lapsed. There was no hereditary guarantee and therefore there is no loss at all upon the County Roscommon.

26411. Though they get the benefit of the railway?—Yes; the greater part of the county.

26412. On which county does the principal deficiency fall?—On the County Leitrim.

26413. Is it over the whole county?—No. It is over what is called the guaranteeing area, which is about five miles around the line.

26414. That is in South Leitrim?—Yes. It was marked out by the Grand Jury, but it does not include all South Leitrim.

26415. There must be a large district that is absolutely free from the guarantee?—There is a large district about Drogheda that is absolutely free from it, and the Cavan portion of it, of course, is quite free from it. It gives only expense in the pound,

Conditions under which the guarantee of the Leitrim ratepayers was given for the Cavan and Leitrim Railway.

Original estimate of receipts and expenses, and the actual result.

Counties served by the railway.

Allegation that County Roscommon benefits at the expense of the Leitrim ratepayers.

Oct. 11, 1907.
Rev. D. Gray,
r.p.,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

Original
estimate of
guarantee
liability, and
the actual
result.

whereas the Leitrim guarantee are giving a shilling in the pound.

26426. The district around Dromed must be benefited by this railway?—Very much benefited by it, because the terminus is there, yet it is perfectly free from any rate.

26427. What was the estimate at the inception of the railway as to the liability that would ultimately fall upon the ratepayers?—The guarantee was told that it would be infinitesimally small; that it might be twopenny or threepence in the pound, but that as likely as not it would be even a penny, because there were great potentialities in the district, and it was considered that those would be developed and that the line would mean that pay the working expenses, and that they would be free from any payment on foot of the guarantee.

26428. I suppose some figure was named as the probable amount?—Yes. They were told that it would not exceed twopenny or threepence in the pound.

26429. What has been the actual result? What have the guaranteeing areas had to pay?—In the commencement of the working of the line the guarantee came to be 1½ in the pound, then it came down to a shilling in the pound, then it came down to as low as sixpence in the pound, and then the pendulum swung back again to a shilling.

26430. What is it now?—A shilling.

26431. What have you got to say with reference to the coal from Arigna district?—The people were promised cheap coal if they gave a guarantee to have the line made, inasmuch as the line would open up the district and give facilities for the mine owners to have the coal exported. And then they got this promise also, that if they guaranteed the stretch of two miles into Roscommon, which was the colliery part of the line, inasmuch as they had to bridge over the Shannon, they would get the coal still cheaper. When they gave the guarantee and the line was made those two promises were broken, and so far from getting it at cheaper rates preferential rates were given in favour of outsiders, and the poor fringe-coted farmers of the guaranteeing area are paying 4s. 6d. a ton more than those who live at Sligo and the North Dublin Union, Ballinacree, or Belfast.

26432. I should like to have that a little more clearly put. How do you make out that they are charged 4s. 6d. a ton more? I am assuming that what you say is true, that the people living in the congested area are paying 4s. 6d. a ton more for coal than those who live outside the district?—Yes.

26433. Have you any figures to show how that is?—Yes. They charge eleven shillings a ton on rails at Arigna Station for the coal to outsiders, and they charge 15s. 6d. to those within the guaranteeing area.

26434. And you say the promise was made that the guaranteeing area would have a benefit?—Yes. The promise was made verbally and in writing; and the pamphlet can be produced in which this promise was made to them at every meeting, and the grand jury made this promise and everyone made it in order to induce them to give the guarantee.

26435. Of course we have nothing to do with the colliery proprietors. Are the proprietors of the Arigna colliery interested in the railway?—They are more interested in the mining company than in the railway undertaking.

26436. It is a limited company that works the colliery?—It is a private company.

26437. Is the private company successful?—It is most successful because the traffic manager of the line is the secretary, and he is a gentleman of great business capacity.

26438. Secretary of what?—Of the mining company. 26439. Then there is a connection between the mining company and the railway?—Yes; a most intimate connection.

26440. Have you, as representing the Leitrim County Council, brought this particular complaint that you now make with reference to the price of coal before the railway company and the colliery company?—I brought it before the Chief Secretary, Mr. Bryce.

26441. And it formed the subject of investigation, I suppose?—Yes. He seemed stunned when he heard of the connection between them and the promises made and how they were broken, and he said to me he sympathized very much with those poor guaranteees; so much so that he said, "If you draw up a scheme by which they can be relieved to

any considerable extent in their rates, I will take that scheme in my own hands, and I will go to the State papers in that case, and I will see if it is in every way legal, and if it is I will do all that a Chief Secretary can do to give it validity." Then I drew up the scheme that was given to the Yeake and Dingle Railway, that is to capitalise the Government grant, and I sent it on to him. Before he had time to consider it he was removed to another sphere. After Mr. Bryce left for America, the Lord Lieutenant's private secretary wrote me a letter saying that this scheme would be considered before the Vice-regal Commission, and that it would receive due consideration from that body.

26442. Is the result of putting such a price on the coal that in the district which you represent English and Scotch coal is used instead?—Yes.

26443. That is the result?—That is the result.

26444. English and Scotch coal can be brought in the district as cheap as coal supplied from Arigna?—Everything considered, those who get the Scotch and English coal think it is a better bargain, and, of course, they act also under a kind of sense of wrong. Take my own case. I know it better than any other case. It is typical of the other cases. I always get my coal from the time I went to the parish of Fennagh, from the Arigna Mining Company. They suddenly raised the coal 4s. or 4s. 6d. a ton and they never sent me as bad coal as they sent me then; and I wrote back to say: "Some of this is vile stuff. You have charged me 4s. a ton more. Had I known you were charging me so much I should never have embarked on this bargain, and I shall not trouble you again." And I did not. I got my coal every year afterwards from Belfast or Dublin. Of course it was the same traffic to the line to get it from Belfast or Dublin, and I was glad not to deprive the line of the traffic. It was the same thing to get it from those places as far as the light railway is concerned, and I am getting Scotch and English coal ever since. I must say it is said they give the best coal to the outsiders. I have reason to know that they give the inferior quality to work the line and to those within the guaranteeing area. I suppose they have competitors to fight against when they send the coal outside the guaranteeing area, and they send them better coal and charge them a cheaper price for it. But it is not that that the guaranteees feel most. What they feel most is that they have been deceived; that there was a bilateral contract entered into between themselves and the promoters, the terms of it were that they should pay 5 per cent. on the paid-up share capital, and that the guaranteeing area should have a working majority on the directorate of the line; and the guaranteees feel that the other side did not keep the terms, and they feel in consequence they would not be bound to pay the guaranteees, were it not that the law compels them. This is the reason that they feel their wrong so keenly. Had the promoters kept faith with them, notwithstanding that they are very poor, they would never say a word if they had the management of the line in their own hands, but here they are deceived, and the other side, the moment they got the contract signed and sealed, changed their terms, and when the Order in Council came out it was found they had power to appoint twenty or forty shareholders directors if they liked, and the guaranteees were left voiceless. I need not say that people suffering wrong will suffer it with far less exhibition of anger if they have a voice, but voiceless people suffering are the most discontented people in existence, and that is the reason these poor guaranteees are most discontented, so much so that were it not for my humble exertions two years ago they would have struck against paying the rate, I told them to pay it, as the law demanded it, and that the Vice-regal Commission that was about to sit would very likely alleviate their grievances. Mr. Bryce told me, too, that he had a lively hope that this Commission would bring a large measure of reform and redress to the poor overladen ratepayers.

26445. What is the constitution of the present Board of Directors?—There are eight shareholders' directors against six nominal directors, but in every case there is a majority of the shareholders' directors. There is never by any chance a single meeting at which the County Council Directors are in a majority, and therefore they are perfectly helpless, and the case is perfectly hopeless. They can bring in no reform. If they had a majority they

Alleged breach of faith with the guaranteees as to the price charged for Arigna coal.

The connection between the Arigna and Leitrim railway Company and the Arigna Colliery Company condensed.

The traffic manager of the railway company secretary of the Arigna Company.

Negotiations with Chief Secretary for relief of guaranteees.

would open a pit at Arigna or Shrewsbury and get coal at a nominal price to work this railway, but they have not a working majority, and cannot introduce this measure of reform or any measure of reform. They are perfectly helpless, hopeless, and useless. Then, the line is very inefficiently worked. The traffic manager seems to have the working of the line practically left in his hands, and the voice of the directors is merely the echo of his. For years a special train has been used to bring hay to the mining company at Arigna; and that special train has been loaded by the millmen, and the loading has been supervised by the traffic manager year after year, and our auditor could find no account in the office in Dublin that such a train ran at all, and they prevented him from looking up the accounts at the local stations, although they had a perfect right to look them up inasmuch as the 18th section of the Order in Council gives plenary power to our auditor to look up the accounts at local stations, and yet he was prevented.

26436 Do you mean to say that the railway has not been credited with any receipts for that particular train?—Yes. I maintain that.

26437 So far as your auditor has been able to ascertain?—Yes. He finds it is not in the accounts in Dublin.

26438 Is the head office in Dublin?—The head office is in Dublin, 87 miles away from the line.

26439 Do the directors meet in Dublin?—The directors meet for every Board meeting in Dublin. They have some traffic meetings occasionally in Ballinacree, but all the Board meetings are held in Dublin.

26440 Where does the manager live?—In Ballinacree.

26441 Where does the secretary live?—The secretary is Mr. Stewart. He lives in Dublin.

26442 The books of the company are in Dublin?—Yes.

26443 The general books?—Yes. I would wish to make a further remark with regard to the manner in which the line is worked. The traffic manager has the rolling stock of the line for his own private purposes without let or hindrance. Upon a recent occasion a foot trolley went from Ballinacree to Mohill. Advice was sent to every station on the line from Ballinacree to Mohill that a special train would run that night at 1 or 2 o'clock. All these stationmasters remained up, burning, at their own expense, oil and coal, and at half-past 1 or 2 o'clock the special did come, but it was the trolley returning with the traffic manager's family. They were out upon a pleasure trip; and it seems indefensible that the rolling stock of the line can be used by private individuals for their own private purposes at will.

26444 There may be some answer to that which you don't know; but your point is this, as representing this guaranteeing area, that there is a considerable loss on the working of this railway, and you think that with proper management the ratepayers would be relieved considerably by increased traffic and reduced expenditure. Is that what you mean?—Yes; I mean that if we, the guarantors, had the management of the line I believe it would more than pay its expenses.

26445 You mean that if the guaranteeing area had a majority?—Yes. They have paid £88,000 up to the present.

26446 What is the total amount?—£88,000 is about what has been paid up to the present. I wish to make a remark about that £88,000. Not one penny of that money was ever produced upon the barren mountain side of Leitrim. Every penny of it came from the coiled children of the guarantee in America, England, and Scotland. And my heart bled as I was coming to give evidence here yesterday. There was a young girl of eighteen going to America from the district. She seemed not to know her way, and asked me for some advice as to how she would get on, and she was young and innocent, and she seemed to be a very poor hand at travelling, and she was facing the dangers of the sea, and greater dangers, perhaps, beyond the sea; and when I considered that her little savings would come to pay this guarantee at home for the parents, certainly the idea sank into my mind as a very sad reflection; and it is only one case typical of thousands of other cases in the district where the children have gone away, and, from the sweat

and toil and life blood that they expended in America, England, and Scotland, sent home this money which has been paid in maintaining the faith of the people when they promised this guarantee, a guarantee which in essence and according to contract they would not be bound to pay, and a guarantee which, according to all laws of economics, should insure them a working majority on the Board and a deciding voice in the expenditure of the money that is spent upon the line.

26447 Is there any special qualification for a director?—Each director must be a shareholder to the extent of £100.

26448 That is the shareholders' directors; but what about the guarantors' directors? I suppose they are nominated by the County Council?—Yes.

26449 There is no qualification necessary for them?—No.

26450 Do the shareholders of the company live in the district?—Yes; a good many of them do.

26451 They are interested in the district, and are ratepayers in the district?—Some of them are not ratepayers. They are nominally interested in the line. But, inasmuch as they are shareholders in the mining company they are more interested in that, and it is more unfair to have them directors of the two companies, inasmuch as when the freightage comes up and the purchase of coal for the working of the line, if they are human at all they must be interested, inasmuch as they have nothing to lose if the railway is the loser, and they have everything to gain if the mining company makes a good bargain. Therefore it is a most unjustifiable thing, and when I told it to Mr. Bryer he seemed stunned, and he seemed to think he never heard of anything like it before.

26452 Do you know the price the Arigna Company charge the railway company for the coal they use?—Yes.

26453 Is that 4s. 6d. a ton more than they charge outsiders?—They charge them 14s. 2d. a ton.

26454 At the pit?—At the railway, at Arigna, and 2s. a ton from that to Ballinacree. That is 16s. 2d.

26455 Your point really is this—that the shareholders' directors of this particular railway are deeply interested in the Arigna coal properties; that the Arigna coal properties are very profitable, whereas the railway is very poor, and the poor ratepayers of this particular guaranteeing area have to make up the deficiency?—Yes.

26456 That is putting in a few words what you mean?—Yes, and then secretary is the traffic manager of the line; and how he can serve two masters nobody can see. He is away at Ballinacree, Dublin, and Belfast lecturing upon the merits of Arigna coal, and the assistant traffic manager has to do his work at £104 per annum, at Ballinacree, and, adding that to his salary, it represents £363 a year for managing 4½ miles of a narrow-gauge railway. And then he is a gentleman of supreme business capacity, and, if he expended the time and attention and energy upon the work of the line that he is expending in promoting the mining company's business I believe the line would be a signal success; but it is a signal failure, and he has made the mining company an unconditional success. Therefore, this is another of the straws that go to break the back of the poor guarantors.

26457 I think, if I may say so, that you have put this particular part of the case very clearly before us, and I don't think it necessary for me to ask you any further questions upon it. We will go on to the other subject, the particular working of the line with regard to goods and passengers. Do you consider that it is sufficiently done?—I think it is not. I think that the fares for passengers should not be raised. They were raised after the two or three first years, and the number of passengers fell off very much, so that now the number of passengers who travel every year by the line is over 1,000 less than it was after the line began to work.

26458 That is eighteen years ago?—Nineteen years ago. And I am quite sure that the falling off in the number of passengers is due to the fact that the fares were raised. Then, with regard to goods traffic absolutely no effort whatever has been made to gain traffic from Longford or any of the principal towns in the County Longford or Roscommon. Absolutely no effort has been made to get traffic from these

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Rev. D. O'Keefe,
representative of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

The qualification for shareholders' directors and their interest in the working of the line.

The personal connection of the directors and managers of the Arigna and Leitrim Company with the Arigna Mining Company alleged to injure the interests of the railway.

The time of the traffic manager taken up by the work of the mining company.

Alleged excessive passenger fares

The development of the goods and cattle traffic of the district alleged to have been neglected by the railway company

Oct. 11, 1907.

Mr. D. Gray,
representative
of the
County
Council.

The present
market value
of the
County
Council
shares.

Forty of
the
County
Council
shares.

The amount
paid by the
County
Council
for the
County
Council
shares.

State
purchase of
the
County
Council
shares
and
County
Council
shares.

The general
poverty of
the
County
Council.

Method of
the
County
Council
to
assist
weight
and
value
of
County
Council
shares.

places, or from the cattle-raising districts of Roscommon. If the traffic manager expended some of his energies in this direction it would be a great gain for the railway.

26438. As a relief to the ratepayers?—Of course. And I wish to remark that the shares are at a premium—I think, 30 per cent. over par.

26440. Which shares?—The railway shares.

26441. Of course with a 5 per cent. guarantee?—Yes. That is the reason; but if the ratepayers grow more discontented, and, from inability or want of will, refuse to pay up, then I believe those shares would fall to 50 per cent. below par inside a month.

26442. Of course if the dividend were in jeopardy the stock would fall?—I must confess I was the cause of their not striking. I said to them to bear the burden until this Commission would issue its findings, and I had a lively expression of hope from Mr. Byrne that the grievance would be redressed. That is what made them content to bear it for the last two years.

26443. Am I right in assuming that the whole district served by this railway is a poor district?—The poorest in Ireland. Leitrim is the poorest county in Ireland, and this is the poorest district in Leitrim. It is a congested district. The farmers have to sit out an existence on the mountainside of Slieve Donard, or on the swamps of the remainder of the county; because it is a county of lakes, and in the vicinity of every lake there is a swamp. The land is so poor that, I think it was Mr. T. W. Russell, now vice-president of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, when he was travelling through the county at one time, who said to someone in the train that it would be dear for a man to live on that land if he was paid for living on it. Yet, they must not only try to do out an existence there, but they have also to pay the guarantee, which was never made out of the lands of Leitrim, but was made out of the sweat and toil of the poor tribes.

26444. The money is contributed to the parents by children who go away?—Yes.

26445. On the general question of Irish railways are you of opinion that it would be an advantage to Ireland if the railways were purchased by the State?—I am.

26446. I suppose that you have given attention to this subject and have considered it all round?—I have principally given my attention to the Cavan and Leitrim Railway because, because the County Council asked me to confine my energies to this subject, inasmuch as it was a grievance in the district.

26447. I am asking your own opinion, independently of the Council, do you think it would be an advantage to Ireland if the whole of the railways were the property of the State?—I think it would be a great advantage if they were purchased by the State, and handed over to an Irish authority created by Parliament—an authority responsible to Irish opinion, working through a board of railway experts responsible to that Irish authority. I think that would be an ideal way of settling the question, because the Government, on account of their credit, could—

26448. Chairman.—I think you have given your view in such clear language that you need not explain why you gave it. Nothing can be plainer than what you have stated, and I think that is all the questions I have to ask you. Mr. Benton may wish to ask you some questions now.

Examined by Mr. Benton

26449. The County Leitrim is in a large measure scheduled as congested?—Nearly all South Leitrim is scheduled as congested. Of course North Leitrim is also, but it has very little to say to the railway.

26450. That means that the inhabitants are held to be in special need of public aid?—They are in special need of public aid. The people are the poorest peasants in Ireland.

26451. But these people in need of public aid have to support this railway?—They have to support this railway.

26452.—Now, as to two or three points of working. The company refuse to weigh goods?—They refuse to weigh goods. They give an advice note demanding a certain amount for carriage of coal, but they refuse to give you the rate or the weight.

26453. They have now a form of advice note for coal which gives no particulars of either the weight or the rate?—Certainly.

26454.—Have you a copy of it?—Yes.

26455. Will you produce it?—What does it tell you if it does not tell you the weight or the rate?—This was handed in at Sligo (producer document). I got advice notes from them annually for my carriage of coal, and they never give a word about the weight or the rate, but demand a certain amount. This gentleman got his coal from Sligo, and this was given him.

26456. Chairman.—Have you got one of your own?—Not with me, but I have them at home. I could forward it.

26457. Mr. Benton.—It just tells you that they have delivered an unspecified quantity of coal, and that you must pay a certain sum?—Take what you get and ask no questions.

26458. You say it is impossible to make a return journey even for a short distance in the one day?—Perfectly impossible, and the time table is not kept at all.

26459. Also, that goods are carried as far as eight miles from one station to another at half the cost of the railway rates?—About half the cost.

26460. That is very discouraging to traffic?—Very discouraging.

26461. The small receipts are not to be wondered at?—They are not. It is natural they would be small.

26462. The trains are not run in proper time, and no attempt is made to keep time?—There is no attempt at all. I have a letter here from a very well known lady in County Cavan. She travelled by this line about three weeks ago. Here is a copy of her letter, and certainly it illustrates the manner in which they observe time, or rather, do not observe time on that line. I will hand it in. (Letter handed in.)

26463. That appears to be as discouraging to travel as the rates are to traffic?—Precisely. Then there is a great deal of pilfering on the line of coal and other things. There is an advice note here and a letter from a person saying that he lost within the last six weeks a bale of linen between Ballinamore and Bawnbeg.

26464. Are there six baronial directors on the board?—Yes; four for Leitrim and two for Cavan.

26465. Are they powerless to alter these causes of complaint?—Perfectly powerless, they tell me.

26466. If that be so you think general complaints are useless?—General complaints are perfectly useless.

26467. At the initiation of the line the promoters led you to hope that the receipts would be double the expenditure, and that the rate, if any, would be only from twopence to fourpence, and they told you that you would have a majority on the board?—Yes; these promises were made, that we would have a majority on the directors, and the other results were held out as the probable result of the working.

26468. That was the understanding on which you accepted the liability?—Yes.

26469. The promoters became the directors?—Most of them did.

26470. That is to say, the gentlemen who made these promises are now the directors who serve the baronial representatives at the board?—Yes, they are, a good many of them. Of course Lord Kingston has died. I am not sure whether any others have died.

26471. The shareholders' directors vote in a body against the baronial directors?—They do, it seems.

26472. The baronial directors also vote together?—Yes.

26473. There are two opposed bodies on the board at each meeting, of which one has neither power nor influence?—Yes.

26474. Take your experience of the three promises. The receipts, instead of being double the expenses are only about equal to the expenses?—Yes; the expenses are about 85 per cent. of the gross receipts.

26475. The rate of twopence has become a rate of a shilling?—Precisely.

26476. Paid out of the money which the children of the people and them from America to help them to live?—That is so.

26477. And instead of having a majority of the baronial directors you have six against eight?—Yes.

26478. The measure in money, I think, of your liability is 5 per cent. on a capital of £250,000, or £2,500 a year?—Precisely.

35488 Of which the line, upon an average, has produced about £1,000?—Yes, £1,000 odd.
35489 Leaving £8,500 a year to be paid by the district and by the Enchequer?—Yes.

35490 Of which the district has paid the larger part, about £5,500 a year on the average?—Yes.

35491 And you say that this result is due to management?—I thoroughly believe that it is. I believe that if there was a majority of the ratepayers' directors they would work the line at a good profit.

35492 The directors for the shareholders and the shareholders themselves have no pecuniary interest in the welfare of this line?—Not a penny of interest except the qualifying amount of shares. They get their dish cooked, and they have only to enjoy it.

35493 The dividends are fixed and safe?—Yes.

35494 And the price of the shares in the market is measured by the fixed and safe character of the dividend?—Precisely; enhanced in value immensely.

35495 Could you expect good management under such a system?—It is impossible. It could not be; taking human affairs as they are, it could not be expected, because great interests are required in order to stimulate human nature to great efforts. Where there is no interest it is against the ordinary law of human nature to have great efforts made.

35496 On the other hand, those who are so deeply concerned, and who bear this heavy burden, would, you believe, if they were entrusted with the management of the line, perhaps make the dividend out of it?—I believe they would, and a profit besides.

35497 And you think that in equity and in common sense those men are entitled to an opportunity of endeavouring, by better management of the line, to relieve themselves from that burden?—I hold that.

35498 Would you say there ought to be a general provision of the law that in every case in which the ratepayers of a district are liable to bear a burden of this kind, and most certainly when they have to pay it, they should be allowed an opportunity of managing the concern by giving them a majority on the Board?—Certainly. That would be but common justice.

35499 Now, in reference to this strange arrangement about the coal, one would have supposed that the same gentlemen controlling the railway and the coal mine might possibly have resulted in some advantage to the railway; but the case seems to be quite the contrary?—Quite the contrary.

35500 How many of the eight shareholders' directors are directors of the mine?—Four, and the same Chairman.

35501 Do you mean five in all?—No, four.

35502 One of whom is the Chairman?—One of whom is the Chairman.

35503 Do the four railway directors who are also directors of the mine constitute the whole directorate of the mine?—I suspect they do, but it is a private company, and we could not get at what their secrets are; but I never heard of any other directors, and I strongly suspect that there are no other directors than these four.

35504 Is it a small private company?—Yes.

35505 It may be assumed that the individual shareholders, especially the directors, have a large pecuniary interest in the mine?—Yes, of course they have.

35506 And their dividends depend on the profits of the mine?—Yes.

35507 Whilst they have only a nominal interest in the railway?—Yes.

35508 £500 each?—Yes.

35509 And the dividends there do not depend on the earnings of the railway?—Of course they don't.

35510 They give coal to outsiders at 11s. or 12s. a ton on the railway at Arigna, to railway servants it is given at 12s. 6d.; the railway company itself pays 14s. 2d., and the guarantors, who might be supposed to be in a most advantageous position, pay 15s. 6d.?—Yes.

35511 The result is that coal is imported?—Yes.

35512 And an Irish industry is discouraged?—Yes. The people cannot use their own coal, and there is a great want of turf in the district, now that the bogs are cut out, and the coal has to come from Belfast and from Dublin.

35513 So the railway company get the coal for 14s. 2d. and 2s. carriage to Ballinamore?—Yes.

35514 You mean they charge themselves for carrying their own coal?—Yes. It is 16s. 2d. at Ballinamore.

35515 Every shilling added to the price of the coal is added to the working expenses?—Yes.

35516 By being added to the working expenses it diminishes the profits?—Yes.

35517 By diminishing the profit it increases the loss on the district?—Yes.

35518 So that every ton of coal sold by the railway directors (who are also directors of the mining company), to the railway company, is equivalent to a loss of about 3s. upon the ratepayers of the district?—Precisely.

35519 A curious result of combined management?—Most curious indeed.

35520 You express in your scheme, I believe, an opinion that the Treasury ought to commute their annual liability by the payment of a capital sum?—Yes.

35521 The Treasury liability is 2 per cent. on £150,000?—Yes.

35522 That would be almost £3,000 a year?—About that.

35523 If the Treasury agreed to do in your case what they have done in the case of the Tinsley and Dingle Company—that is, to commute at thirty-three years' purchase of the liability, it would give you about £150,000?—Yes.

35524 If you paid off that much of the capital of the railway you would then have to provide 5 per cent. on £50,000, that would be about £3,000 a year?—Yes.

35525 Mr. Ansell.—Have you power to pay off at any time? Are the guaranteed shares guaranteed for a number of years?—There is no term.

35526 There is a perpetual guarantee?—They are guaranteed in perpetuity.

35527 Is there power to pay off?—If the shareholders and the Treasury are unanimous.

35528 Can you make the shareholders take the money, or would you have to buy them up at the market value of 150?—I dare say if we took them in hand we could buy them at face value or a little over it. I don't think we would have to pay the premium upon the shares.

35529 That would be their generosity, not your right?—I think not, because they could see that if they did not come to terms the ratepayers would strike against paying, and these shares would tumble down, and therefore it would be to their advantage to take a reasonable price.

35530 Mr. Stenton.—There are such burning feelings in the district about mismanagement and this heavy burden, that you have no doubt the body of shareholders would be willing to come to reasonable terms to bring it to an end?—I believe they would, in their own interests even.

35531 That would leave a capital of £50,000, on which there was to be provided 5 per cent., which would come to £3,000?—Yes.

35532 Have you the slightest doubt that if there were eight honest directors and six shareholders' directors you would make that £3,000 on the line?—Not the slightest.

35533 You make three shares. You say that the officials ought to be in touch with the line, the directors of the railway should not be directors of the mine, and there should be a majority on the Board for the ratepayers?—Certainly.

35534 What is the reason for this curious disposal of the officials? The traffic manager, you say, goes about burning on minerals; but why are the others so far away—the solicitor in Belfast, the secretary in Dublin, and the engineer in Enniskillen or in some other county?—They give a number of very busy seasons, but none of these reasons would hold water at all. There is no reason according to common sense, but none of these reasons would hold water at all. There is no reason according to common sense, but none of these reasons would hold water at all. There is no reason according to common sense, but none of these reasons would hold water at all.

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Oct. 11, 1867.

Rev. D. Grogan, Esq., representative of the Liskeilly County Council.

Proposed commutation of the Treasury liability and scheme of financial readjustment of the Enniskillen and Liskeilly Company.

The certainty of better results under a management more representative of the ratepayers.

Complaint as to the location of the chief offices of the company at different places away from the line.

Oct. 11, 1902.

Mr. D. Gray, n.r. representative of the Lifford County Council.

An unrepentant accident on the line.

The alleged indifference of the shareholders' directors.

Proposal that shareholders under statute should have a majority on the board of directors.

Unification of the Irish railways under Irish control, as Irish controlling authority advocated.

Enslavement of passenger train management.

The question of the proposition of increased and shareholders' directors on the Carron and Lifford Board.

26545. You say all the officials should be quartered at the chief station of the line, as probably one block of officials—Yes. As it is, they never chance into anything connected with the line. On one occasion a motor trolley was sent out, and a train went without a staff, and ran into it, and threw the two occupants of it towards the stars, and smashed in the woodwork, and the fact is, the traffic manager took back the broken trolley into the sheds at Ballinacree, had it patched up, and the Directors in Dublin never heard a word about it, and the Board of Trade never heard a word about it. One of the shareholders' directors was asked about it. He said he had been at every meeting which had occurred since then, and he had never heard a word of it at a Board meeting. He was asked—"Cannot you go see the broken trolley and see how it is patched up?" "No," he said, "I won't." I forgot exactly his words, but they were tantamount to this, that it would look like saying after the business of the traffic manager, and he refused to look after it. They don't look into anything. They take the traffic manager's account of it the same as Gospel truth. They are only the faint echo of the traffic manager's report. This director is typical of the rest of the shareholders' directors. He was asked, and he would not go to look at that.

26546. It would seem as if this company, by pursuing a policy of reserve, have secured a greater fame in the end?—Precisely. It has been just in the opposite direction.

26547. If you could get a general provision of the law that ratemakers who are liable to make good a guarantee should have a majority on the Board that would accomplish your other purpose?—Yes.

26548. Because they could deal with the officials, and it would not matter greatly how the remainder of the Board was composed?—Precisely. That would right the whole thing.

26549. You are in favour of a united system of railways under Irish public control?—Yes.

26550. Do you consider that such a system would hold out the best prospects for the careful and diligent working of such lines as the Carron and Lifford, and for the utmost relief to the ratemakers?—Yes.

26551. Chairman.—There is a letter which was sent by a person named Penrose to the manager of the railway which you mentioned. I don't think it is necessary to put it on the notes, but we are at liberty, if you like, to mention the incident referred to in the letter. On the 2nd inst., Miss Penrose and some others proceeded to Anasladh by the 1.30 p.m. train for Garadice, intending to return that evening. Before alighting at Anasladh they inquired from the guard the time the train was due on its return journey, and were informed 5.35 p.m., and it goes on to say that they arrived in time, and found that the train had gone, and they had to stop in this place all night?—Yes.

26552. They say further that that also occurred a short time ago to another passenger?—Yes.

26553. Chairman.—I think that is sufficient for the notes.

Examined by Mr. ACHESON.

26554. I think you know Mr. Connolly Lowder?—Yes.

26555. You knew he came before us last July, and gave very long evidence as to this railway?—I heard he did.

26556. You have not seen his evidence, perhaps?—I saw a short account in the paper.

26557. You have not seen the full account?—No.

26558. Because probably he has detailed practically all your grievances, so I won't ask you about them again; but I should just like to ask you about this. You make a strong point that the shareholders' directors have a majority?—Yes.

26559. That, I suppose, is under the Order in Council which established the railway?—Yes.

26560. The Order in Council got changed at some period?—No. The Order never got changed.

26561. The draft proposal was that the directors were to be half and half?—No.

26562. The shareholders should have an actual majority?—The promise was to that effect.

26563. And the baronial people should have a majority?—Yes; a working majority.

26564. At a later period it got changed?—Yes.

26565. By the Order of the Lord Lieutenant in Council the shareholders have a majority?—Yes; contrary to the contract that was made with the ratemakers.

26566. But an Act of Parliament, and this is practically an Act of Parliament, voids any contract, even if there were one?—Not in justice; if the parties who signed that and expected it were not acquainted with the change it would not bind them.

26567. Of course you know that there is elaborate procedure for taking care that everybody gets notice. The change cannot be made behind their backs?—It was done behind their backs. Not one ratemaker in the place ever heard a word about it as far as I know.

26568. I think there must be some mistake somewhere. It could not be done without notice being given?—It was very easy to draw a pencil across that portion. That is what was done up. The very moment that the Order in Council was applied for the promise was held out—"You will have a working majority," and they expected they would. The very moment the Order in Council came out it was found they had not. Of course those who asked for the Order in Council and manipulated it made that alteration. The ratemakers never knew anything about it as far as I can find out.

26569. You say the two sides vote against each other on the Board?—So I understand.

26570. You are not a director?—No.

26571. Could you say whether, to your knowledge, it is the case that there are divisions?—I can give you a case typical, I daresay, of the rest. I heard of a case where an engineer had to be appointed to see what would be the cost of making these extensions that were so much talked about, and for the making of which £24,000 was offered as a grant by the Treasury.

26572. Was promised; not given?—It was promised.

26573. It has not been given?—Of course not; it was not accepted. But there had to be an engineer appointed to inquire and report how much it would take to make these extensions. This got up a discussion at the Board, and the shareholders' directors had their candidate for it, and the County Council had theirs, and they voted ably on each side, and the minority went to the wall.

26574. That is one instance that you know?—One instance that I know.

26575. You fancy that is not uncommon?—I fancy that is the order of the day, because the County Council directors say they are perfectly helpless, and can carry nothing. Of course that means that the other side vote in a body against them.

26576. You say the Board's auditor was refused access to the accounts?—Yes.

26577. He has a statutory right to see them?—That is the reason he should be allowed to see them.

26578. Why did he not exercise his statutory right?—If guarded by the police he broke the door as he could.

26579. Why should not he?—He has got the law on his side. If people want to use their legal rights how can one help them?—If you want to do that you would find yourself in conflict with the law in another direction.

26580. You see the difficulty is this. The law gives him a right to see them?—Of course the law gives him a right to see them.

26581. And when somebody says "You shan't" he takes it lying down?—If he were to use violence it would be worse.

26582. Would not he get an order of the Court?

Chairman.—Of course there comes in the question of expense, and it is a poor county.

26583. Mr. Acheson.—I do not see how anyone can successfully give them powers if they do not use them?—The ratemakers have to pay the whole of the cost of an Order of the Court. So we are handicapped in every way.

26584. Just one other point, to meet your strictures on the management being in Dublin?—Yes; I hold it is a monstrous arrangement.

26585. Do you know that all over the world it is the commonest arrangement—do you know that half the railways in South America are managed from London?—Oh, but the circumstances of South America are very different from ours.

26586. Let me give you another instance nearer home?—It is not so in Ireland.

25587. Mr. Asworth.—Do you know that the Southern Railway of France, which does not come within 400 miles of Paris, has its office in Paris?—There may be reasons for it. I do not know the history of it, but I can see no reason in common sense can justify the arrangement. I know a good deal about the circumstances of our line, and I hold that it is a monstrous case of wilful extravagance.

Chairman.—I think you are right, Father Gray. It is such a small concern.

25588. Mr. Asworth.—Just one other question. What do you think the railway can be worked for? Have you thought of that?—I think it could be worked for about 50 per cent. of the gross receipts. I am certain it could.

25589. Do you mean of the present gross receipts of 24 6s. a week?—24 8s. 6d.

25590. Do you think it could be worked for half that?—I think it could be worked for about 80 per cent. of the gross receipts—if the baronial directors had the management of it.

25591. Chairman.—Your assumption is that you could double the receipts?—Yes, that we would effect a great increase.

25592. Mr. Asworth.—Do you think you could keep the receipts where they are and keep down the expenses under the present rate?—I hold that, too, but I believe that if the baronial directors had the management of it the receipts would go up and the expenses go down.

25593. Do you know any light railway in the world worked in the way you suggest at 50 per cent?—I have read something of the history of the light railways on the Continent and in India, and all these have been worked for about 50 per cent. And I have it from a gentleman who has travelled those countries and wrote a book about them and who has had experience of the railways, and he said they were worked for about 50 per cent.

25594. I wish you would give me the reference, because it is quite new to me.

25595. Chairman.—I think, Father Gray, the best answer you can give us is that you do not know anything about the working of the railways yourself?—That is what I say. I am only telling you what I was told.

25596. Mr. Asworth.—Were you quoting—can you give the authority?—Well, perhaps I would not have his permission, but he is a very high authority, but the book was not so explicit as he was. But he is an acknowledged authority upon railways, and he has travelled Russia and India and most parts of the world, and he said he never knew a line to be so badly and so extravagantly worked as our line, and he said that 50 per cent. or a very little over it was the average expended in working expenses on the Continent and in India.

25597. On light railways?—On light railways.

25598. Mr. Asworth.—What you believe is that if the line were managed as you propose the receipts would be increased and that 50 per cent. of them would pay the expenses?—Precisely so.

Examined by Colonel HORTONMAN PAR.

25599. I think I understood you to say that the receipts on the Cavan and Leitrim Railway for passenger and goods traffic had decreased within the last twenty years—that they are not so good now as when the line was first opened—that the passenger and goods traffic are less now than when they began?—Yes; a thousand passengers per annum less.

25600. I am not able to go back twenty years, but I have been reading the light railway returns for 1825, eleven years ago, and I find in looking at them, that so far from their having been a decrease the reverse is the case. In 1825 the number of first-class passengers was 3,250, while in 1925 it was 5,300, and the third-class passengers were, in 1825, 80,000, and in 1925, 91,000, showing an increase of 14,000 passengers on the former year?—My comparison was between the first years and the present time. I instigated a comparison and contrasted the first years with the present, and I hold that there is over a thousand of a difference per annum in the number of passengers, taking this standard of comparison.

25601. I do not doubt what you say is correct, but in the last ten years there has not been a decrease, and perhaps the decrease in the twenty years is due to emigration, which we all know has unfortunately

taken place?—I think that does not affect it very much. I think if the farms were left at the original amount the people would go by the railway to Ballinamore and Belturbet and Drumshambo and Mohill markets in greater numbers and that the passenger traffic would go up considerably, but that the farms are too high.

25602. Allow me for a moment. The same returns show that the average fare of railway passengers in 1866 was 2s. per head for first-class and 6d. for third, while in 1905 it was 18s. for first-class and 8s. for third. So that would be rather against your argument, I think?—The standard of comparison I took was the first years and the present. In this way my figures are correct.

25603. Still I presume you will admit that ten years is a fair number of years to go back upon, and if it can be shown that there was a considerable increase in numbers in the last ten years and a decrease in the average passenger fare per head, it would rather qualify your statement. I think you will admit that?—It might be a slight way.

25604. I do not wish to press the point. I think you stated to Mr. Asworth that you considered that the office expenses in Dublin are considerably higher than they would be in Ballinamore?—They are by about £250.

25605. The railway returns show that the general charges on the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway, which cover the directors' fees, secretarial expenses and that kind of thing, are only £700 a year, a sum which compares very favourably with similar railways, in fact it compares to advantage with all the other light railways in Ireland; that is, that the general charges and expenses which cover the secretary's and directors' fees are less in fact on the Cavan and Leitrim Railway than on any other light railway in Ireland?—But that would not justify them in having these increased expenses put upon the ratepayers when they could do it more cheaply.

25606. But as to the expense to the ratepayers, I think the maximum contribution would be something like £2,700 a year?—Yes.

25607. But owing to the fact that the average profits of the railway are about £1,100 a year the maximum contribution on the part of the guaranteeing area is reduced by £1,100 a year, in other words, instead of £2,700 you only pay £1,600. Is not that so?—That is so.

25608. So that though you would naturally rather pay nothing at all, still I think, under the circumstances you are better off than a good many other railway companies in the country?—But that does not justify inefficient management, though it shows that we are not quite so bad as we possibly might be.

25609. The returns show that there has been an increase in the receipts in the last ten years of £1,600 a year?—Yes.

25610. And an increase in passenger traffic of 13,000 or 14,000; so, I think, after all it shows that there has been a certain development of trade in the district?—Oh, yes, but it has been infinitesimally small considering what might be done. There has been no real effort to develop the traffic, almost not a single effort made.

25611. Now, with regard to representation on the Board of Directors, you are aware that the Board of Trade, on the requisition of the County Council or of twenty ratepayers, could deal with a case of that kind?—Yes, they could.

25612. Has any requisition ever been made by the County Council or by twenty ratepayers?—Well, the County Council understood that some private individuals made a representation to the Board of Trade, who referred them to the Railway Commissioners, and the Railway Commissioners when they were applied to and they could not dispose it unless it was brought up in legal form as a matter of law before them, and considering the heavy expenses the ratepayers and the County Council thought it was no use incurring cost.

25613. The Board of Trade?—Yes.

25614. Is there any statement of that in writing?—Yes; there is. They sent a letter in reply referring the case to the Railway Commissioners, and when the Railway Commissioners were applied to they said they could not do it without its being brought up in a legal form before them, and that would mean very heavy expense on the ratepayers.

25615. Chairman.—And that in fact frightened you away?—It did certainly.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. D. Gray, M.P., representative of the Moleen, County, Council.

Increase in number of passengers and decrease in average passenger fare per head for past decade.

Comparison of the general charges on the Cavan and Leitrim Railway with similar rail ways.

The increase in passenger and receipts for past decade has done for short of the position of the district.

Expense of appeal to Board of Trade or Railway Commissioners' Court a deterrent to the County Council taking action.

O. L. 11, 1907.

Rev. D. Gray,
F.R.S.,
representative of the
Leitrim
County
Council

Complaint as
to non-payment
and slow
passenger
train service.

25615 And the representation was in respect of these matters which you undoubtedly think a grievance?—Yes.

25616 Your contention, I presume, being that the ratepayers who have to find the money in any case, whether this line is well or badly managed, have a greater interest in the efficiency of the working of the line than the shareholders whose dividends are guaranteed?—Yes, they have an interest in it and the others have no interest or hardly an interest—a nominal interest.

25617 Where the facts were brought before the Board of Trade it seems strange that in such trivial matters as that the Board of Trade should not have tried to arrange them with the railway company?—They referred the person to the Railway Commissioners.

25618 You, perhaps, might let us have the letter?—Yes; I think I can get the letter, if necessary.

25619 You complain of the train service also, I think?—Yes; the letter I handed in would illustrate it.

25620 I think the railway guide shows there are only three trains in the day to Bellinabreid and the other places?—Yes.

25621 And they take an average of two or three hours to do a distance of 27 miles?—Yes.

25622 Of course they stop at a great many stations?—A great many stations.

25623 And you think that greater acceleration would be to the advantage of the public?—Of course it would be.

25624 There is only one other point, which you did not refer to in your evidence, that I should like to ask you about, as you know the district well, and that is as to the reason why the County Council reported the offer of £24,000 that was made to them by the Irish Government—that was for an extension to the railway?—I know the history of the occurrence.

25625 I do not want it at length?—Well, the reason was because the ratepayers refused to take any further financial liability, and even though it was explained to them that it would be only a nominal liability they said, "Well, we were hoodwinked before and we cannot know but we are about to be hoodwinked now," and on the principle of "Once bitten, twice shy," they raised their voice and told the County Council not to accept it.

25626 But is it not the fact that the shareholders' directors gave a personal and individual and collective guarantee that in the event of any deficit they would be responsible?—Well, there were two reasons against it. The first was that it was not a sufficient guarantee, and secondly, they did not give it in a legal form, and at a meeting of the County Council it was considered, and they found that it was not given in legal form and that they were not given a sufficient guarantee. Since then the Great Northern line, knowing that it would be a benefit to their own company to develop the Arigna mine, have offered to guarantee £500 a year in perpetuity for one of the hours of the line, one extension, that is the mine.

25627 At any rate, if this is given the line will be made?—I am not so sure of that.

25628 And it will rest with the Treasury to make the advance. I suppose if the Treasury make the advance the Great Northern Railway are prepared to guarantee?—But they only guarantee for one extension, that is to Arigna.

25629 Still I presume that should be accepted on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread?—But without a guarantee being put from some quarter for the other extension, I think the ratepayers would not agree because they are suffering from the existing guarantee, which is like the shirt of Nessus upon them and they cannot shake it off, and cannot be bought or induced to agree to any further liability.

25630 And you think that if the guarantee given by the shareholders' directors had been in legal form there would have been no difficulty with the County Council?—So the County Council told me. Some of the County Council told me that that was the reason it fell through.

Examined by LORD PIERCE.

25631 You say that all the petition made by the promoters and the Grand Jury to the ratepayers have been broken?—Have been broken.

25632 Now, did the ratepayers appeal to the Lord Lieutenant or to any authority when the promises were broken, when they knew and saw that they were broken?—They appealed to me and they asked me to lay the case before the Chief Secretary.

25633 And have you any paper stating the promises they made that you could hand in?—They asked me to send a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant.

25634 But the promises made by the Grand Jury were not verbal promises?—They were in writing.

25635 And have you any statement of them?—Yes, I have the pamphlet that was issued by the promoters at the commencement.

25636 And which was also assented by the Grand Jury?—Yes.

25637 Can you not hand that in to the Commission here?—I will send it to you by to-morrow's post.

25638 I am not doubting your word, but when you come to deal with these things I think the Commissioners should see the papers on which you very properly tell us that the ratepayers voted for that guarantee?—Precisely.

25639 And voted on the strength of those promises?—On the strength of those promises.

25640 The personal word of the Grand Jury made you feel that they were not going to break the promises?—No question about it. I can send you that pamphlet by to-morrow's post.

25641 So when the ratepayers appealed to you to put the case forward they never thought of taking any action as a body to try to get the Order in Council reversed?—Well, if you can understand, they are poor peasants and they do not know the law and do not know how to get out of a difficulty like that.

25642 You stated that the Arigna Coal-mining Company were very prosperous. Now, have you any knowledge of the dividends they are paying on their working?—They are paying 5 per cent. from the very beginning and two bonuses of fifty a year each.

25643 They have paid regularly 5 per cent. 1-5 per cent., and two bonuses of 30 per cent. each.

25644 Mr. Norton—50 per cent. of the whole capital?—50 per cent. of the whole capital.

25645 So that the capital has been returned?—The capital has been actually returned.

25646 And 5 per cent. per annum paid as well?—5 per cent. paid as well.

25647 Lord Pierce.—And that has been through the assistance of the railway company getting a guarantee from the ratepayers?—Yes, I hold that everything is so abnormal about it that it looks like what you would read in a novel.

25648 Now, as to those directors that are mentioned, you say there are four of them, one being chairman of the coal company. Are they paid fees as directors of the railway company?—No; they are not paid fees, but their travelling expenses and their incidental expenses are paid.

25649 Do the board directors get any fees?—The board directors get no fees at all. I did not say that. They do not get any fees, but their expenses.

25650 But there are no fees?—Oh, no fees.

25651 Chairman.—They get a small fee for attendance?—Their expenses. They get a guinea a day and their travelling expenses.

25652 Mr. Order Breighton, Solicitor.—This company's representative will appear before you in the proper time.

Rev. JOSEPH MECHAN, C.E., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

25653 Father Mechan, I think you also have been requested by the Leitrim County Council to give evidence?—Yes; I have.

25654 Here you heard the evidence given by Father Gray?—Well, I have heard most of it.

25655 But I think your evidence is practically on different lines altogether?—Well, I refer incidentally to the Cavan and Leitrim Railway, and it will be on the lines just that Father Gray went over. With everything that Father Gray said, as far as I heard it, I agree.

* See Appendix No. 7

Assess
guarantee for
Arigna
extension
offered by
Great
Northern
Company.

This document
relates to the
ratepayers
not to incur
any further
liability under
the guarantee.

Rev. Joseph
Mechan, C.E.,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council

25656. May I take it that so far as the evidence that you heard Father Gray give with reference to the Cavan and Leitrim Railway you entirely agree?—Yes; of course, there are some points that he did not take up, those alone I should like to refer to.

25657. But you have heard the evidence that he has given?—Yes, as far as I heard it I agree with it.

25658. You wish to refer to the Irish railways in general and to this railway in Co. Leitrim in particular?—Yes.

25659. That is what you wish to bring under our notice?—Yes.

25660. And also with regard to the railways as they affect certain industries in the country?—Yes.

25661. Now, what particular industries do you refer to?—Well, the industries that I should like to refer to are the butter and the farm produce industries. You see the value of the amount of butter that was exported, for instance in 1904 was £3,195,045. That is taken from the Department of Agriculture's Blue Book.

25662. You say that is the value of the butter exported from Ireland last year?—Yes, and you can judge of the relative value by the fact that it is said that of eggs amount, roughly, to one-eighth of the total exports.

25663. It is an enormous sum!—An enormous sum; and therefore anything affecting that industry would affect very much the country.

25664. And you have also got some information to give us with reference to co-operative dairy societies?—Yes.

25665. Now, what particular part of the County Leitrim are you more interested in?—I have a map of Leitrim here.

25666. Well, are you north, south, east or west?—North of Lough Allen.

25667. Would you kindly say what particular part of Leitrim are you more specially interested in?—Well, Leitrim is divided into two parts—North and South Leitrim.

25668. Are you more interested in the north than in the south?—Oh, much more in the north. I know very little of the south.

25669. Then what are the railways in your particular district to which you wish to refer?—Well, the Sligo and Leitrim Railway for one, and the Midland and the Great Northern.

25670. Do you consider that the County Leitrim is well accommodated with railways?—No, there are very few railways at all in the Co. Leitrim. If you notice that map there is hardly a railway touching it at all, except the Cavan and Leitrim Railway in the south and the Sligo and Leitrim Railway running across the north.

25671. Now, have you any particular knowledge with reference to the rates and fares, the fares for passengers, and the rates for goods?—Yes, I should be glad to put that before you.

25672. You have been at some trouble to gather information with reference to these subjects?—Yes.

25673. Do you consider the passenger fares in Ireland are fair and reasonable compared with the passenger fares in England, we will say?—They are not fair as compared with those in England. There are half a dozen reasons why the fares in Ireland should be lower than in England. Notwithstanding that, they are for third-class passenger fares the very same, and for second-class and first-class passengers they are very much dearer in Ireland than in England, the amount of difference being that, whereas in England you have the second-class fare 25 per cent. over the third-class fare; in Ireland you have it 60 and 40 per cent. over, generally about 50 per cent. over the third-class fare. I have taken details of these fares.

25674. The third-class fare in both countries is about a penny a mile?—About a penny a mile.

25675. You have stated that for certain reasons you are of opinion that the fares in Ireland should be less than in England?—Yes.

25676. Tell us briefly what your opinions are on this one point. Why do you say that passenger fares (which we will deal with first) in Ireland should be less than they are in England?—First, because the railways in Ireland have cost an immense deal a smaller sum per mile than the railways in England.

25677. That is one reason?—That is one reason.

25678. Now, you say you have figures to show that?—Yes, I have figures to show that.

25679. Tell us what they are?—Well, the English railways cost roughly £67,638 per mile.

25680. I do not think that is quite accurate. Give us a single line, a case that would compare with an Irish line?—The Irish railways cost roughly £10,596 per mile, as against £67,638 per mile for the English railways. That is the first reason.

25681. Go on and give us your other reasons?—Then, you have labour far cheaper in Ireland than in England, and the cost of labour totals about 50 per cent. of the total working expenditure. I give that on the authority of Mr. Ormonde in his book.*

25682. Now, that is another reason. Have you any more reasons?—Well, the Government has expended in the making of Irish railways a large sum. The contribution of the Government towards the making of the railways is something like £1,763,694. In fact, there is the no passenger duty in Ireland. In England the passenger duty for the year 1905 was £228,587. That is a very pretty item out of the £226,030,705 which for 1905 is the amount of the gross receipts of the English railways. If Ireland paid passenger duty in the same way it would not amount to £20,000. It would be merely £19,994 in that year, which is a very small item after all.

25683. That is another of the reasons?—That is another of the reasons why passenger fares should be lower in Ireland than in England.

25684. Have you any other reasons?—The accommodation is inferior in Ireland to what it is in England.

25685. You mean station accommodation?—Both train accommodation and station accommodation.

25686. Lord Parnell?—The carriages?—The carriages.

25687. Chairmen?—Go on. Have you any other reasons?—The trains are slower in Ireland. That is an admitted fact. And of course the higher speed causes greater wear and tear, and the engine consumes more fuel, and the road beds are more expensive to maintain as well as to make. And all these things together contribute to make the expenses far greater in England than in Ireland. And then the last, and I think the greatest, reason is this, that Ireland is immeasurably poorer than England. Of course it is cheaper to run that would suit us. The trains could scarcely be too cheap in Ireland.

25688. In other words, you are of opinion that more people would travel, and it would be a great inducement if the agriculturists of the country could move about with their produce at a lower rate than they now pay. That is what you mean generally?—That is what I mean generally.

25689. And for the reasons given?—For the reasons given. If you take England as a standard—which I do not take so, because there are no countries more diametrically opposed to each other than England and Ireland—but if you take England as a standard, our passenger fares are very high.

25690. Of course that is easy to say. How do you prove that?—Can you give us just one or two illustrations?—I take these as illustrations. I take them from the time tables of the different railways.

25691. Give them?—Take from Sligo to Dublin, 124 miles.

25692. That is on the Midland Great Western Railway?—The Midland Great Western; and for that the third class single fare is 11s. 8d. (that is just a penny a mile); and then for the second class the fare is 17s. 10d., that is 50 per cent. higher than the third.

25693. Just give the return third class fare?—It is 21s. It is very little lower than double.

25694. It is practically double?—Practically double. That is an illustration, and that holds universally.

25695. Well, now, another instance?—Again, if you take Ballymore—at is 120 miles, as you will see, which is a convenient figure—and the third class fare of the Midland Great Western Company from Ballymore to Dublin is 10s.; the second is 15s. 6d., and the first is 22s. 6d.; and the return fare, third class, is 18s. 6d. Of course you have the limited mail besides, and that works out at a penny and an eighth per mile.

25696. Do they carry third class passengers on that train?

25697. We do, Sir Charles.

25698. There is an eighth of a penny more?—(Witness)—An eighth of a penny more on that.

25699. Give us one instance on the Great Northern?—Ballymore and Dublin, Great Northern and Sligo and Leitrim.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph Meenan, O.C., representative of the Leitrim County Council.

Cost of construction of English and Irish lines and cost of labour in both countries contrasted.

The large Government grants towards Irish railways and their freedom from passenger duty as reasons for lower fares.

Alleged inferior train and station accommodation on Irish railways.

The general poverty of Ireland another reason for lower rates and fares.

Illustrations of high passenger fares in Ireland as the Midland Great Western and Great Northern Railways.

* "Railway Rates" (1900), p. 138. In, taking the total working expenses at 100, in England the percentages of wages was, in 1885, 69.25, in Belgium, 37.92. In both countries this percentage is now much higher.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph
Meenan, and
representative
of the
Ladies
County
Council.

The percentage of second class fares over third on the Great Western Railway.

26695 Yes?—The length is 184 miles, and the third class fare is 12s. But they are competing there with the Midland, and consequently the fare there approaches to the fare on the Midland. The second class fare is 18s. 10d., that is 65 per cent. higher than the third. The first is 24s.

26697 And that is just double of the third?—That is just double.

26698 Now give us an example in England?—Well, I have picked out just one example. I know it is generally a penny a mile for third, but in order to show how much higher was the second than the third, I picked out the case of from London to Loughwater, on the Great Western Railway.

26699 Colonel Hutchinson?—Thirty-five miles?—I do not know the distance. The fare is 2s., second class 3s. 6d.

26700 Chairman?—I do not think there is much in that?—The point there is that the second in that case is but 25 per cent. higher than the third.

26701 Whereas in the previous case that you gave us it was 65 per cent. higher?—Sixty-five per cent. and fifty-nine per cent. Another case would be London to Minehead. I give that one because it is exactly the same proportion. The second is 25 per cent. higher than the third.

I do not think we dispute the figures about the percentages, and therefore I do not think we need go further into that. We know that the second class fares are less proportionately in England than in Ireland.

Mr. Seaton?—But his testimony is important.

Chairman?—The percentages that you give are correct. Sir Herbert Fyfe?—On most of the railways.

26702 Chairman?—On nearly all the railways. I do not think it necessary to go with them, but then you have foreign illustrations?—Yes. Germany has reduced its passenger fares very much indeed of the past five or six months.

26703 Is that within your own knowledge?—It is not for Germany, but the Belgian and French fares are within my own knowledge.

26704 Do you know the Belgian fares?—Yes, personally.

26705 Take a Belgian instance, if you do not mind.

I want to shorten this as much as possible, and I want to get the points favorable to your argument?

—Taking it from the Belgian time tables exactly in the same way as I have taken it from the English time tables, I find that for thirty kilometres, or 18½ miles, it amounts to five centimes, that is a half-penny per kilometre, or, roughly, 1s. 3d. for third class; that is, for 18½ miles you have the third class fare 1s. 3d.

26706 I think, with all respect to you, we will have it in English money?—Yes; I have changed it.

26707 That is, for 18½ miles the ordinary fare in Belgium would be 1s. 3d.?—Oh, excuse me; it is in France. In Belgium 18½ miles would cost but 11d.

26708 You told me just now that you had personal knowledge of the fares in Belgium?—And in France.

26709 Then we will take the French illustration?—I have here the time-tables of both.

26710 Just one or two illustrations will do. If I follow you, for 18½ miles on the Northern of France Railway the third class fare is 1s. 3d.

26711 Not quite 1s. 3d.?—Not quite; no. Anywhere in Belgium it would be less, only 11d.

26712 Colonel Hutchinson?—Perhaps it may save time if I give the English equivalent of the French fares per mile. They are: first class, 172 of a penny; second, 115; and third, 177. Germany has given reductions recently, but they are very largely qualified by the charge for baggage. The figures for passenger fares work out at 1.55 of a penny per mile for first class, 86d. for second class, and 84d. for third?—And then there is the fourth class?

26713 That is 38d. But it is qualified by the charges for baggage and by the exchanges for travelling by express trains?—But with regard to these two qualifications. In the first place passengers generally, I understand—certainly tourists—take into the carriage with them, as we do here in Ireland, small handbags and parcels and the railway officials

make no bones about it. In Belgium passengers are allowed to take up to 55 lbs. into the compartment with them free. Then again, the German charges for luggage are low. 2-6d. will carry as much as 50 lbs. up to 31 miles, but, the same weight up to 136 miles, and in the same weight as far as you please. For luggage above 50 lbs. the charges are equally reasonable. So that, as a rule, is a rather small qualification. And with regard to express trains, the passengers are allowed, without extra charge, to go by all express trains except two or three called express de luxe, and they are charged only a very small extra for these.

26714 I think there is a surcharge, according to class, in express trains, and that it is 3d. for a third class passenger and 6d. for a first or second class passenger up to 40 miles; from 47 to 92 miles 1s. for first and second class and 6d. for third class, and above 92 miles 2s. for first and second class and 1s. for third class? I think there is an express in which there is no surcharge, but in the new express trains there is that surcharge.

Mr. Asworth?—Your figure do not, I take it, include the very heavy new taxation that has been put on passenger traffic in Germany.

Colonel Hutchinson?—I understand that has been abolished.

Mr. Asworth?—There is heavy new taxation, something like 5 per cent.

26715 Colonel Hutchinson?—There was, but it is not now in force. It was found that the taxation which you speak of was acting as a deterrent, and they took it off and brought in this new tariff?—(Witness.)—The result of that new taxation to which Mr. Asworth refers was an agitation in Germany, which resulted in the very serious reduction of fares I have referred to.

26716 Chairman?—Now I think we have got sufficient from you with reference to passenger fares?—Well, in Belgium there is a passenger fare of 11½ francs that enables you to travel as much as you like—that is for 9s. 5d.

26717 That is a season ticket?—You get a ticket which allows you to trip over all the Belgian railways, and even three or four hundred miles which do not belong to the State—in fact, to go where you like for 9s. 5d. for five days, or for 10s. 10d. for fifteen days.

26718 Lord Pirbright?—As long as you like?—Yes; you can keep running around as you wish.

26719 And here in the trains?—Yes, and I get one of these for the fifteen days. You can go anywhere you like in Belgium for the fifteen or five days.

26720 Chairman?—We have got that evidence. Now, with regard to goods rates, do you suggest or think that the goods rates charged by the Irish companies are up to their maximum powers?—I should like to go into that, sir.

26721 Well, yes or no first?—Yes. I suggest that they are all within a small fraction of their maximum powers, and, more particularly, when they want to drive the customer to adopt the owner's rate.

26722 Let me see if I clearly understand. You are of opinion that the rates are up to the maximum, speaking generally. Of course there are exceptions?—Well, speaking generally.

26723 And I understand that, speaking generally, you are of opinion that the goods rates in Ireland are pretty well up to the maximum powers the companies possess?—They are.

26724 And that in consequence of that the dealers or traders in the country are driven to have their traffic carried at the owner's rate, which are considerably lower than the other rates? That is so, you say?—That is so I say.

26725 How do you know this?—From the Blue Book and receipted railway bills. I have compared the actual rates charged with the maximum rates allowed, that is, with the Blue Book, which is the final authority on the subject.

26726 What is the date of this?—Well, it has been all inside of the last year. The way I obtained the information is this—

* On the Elbe and Lohr, a typical small railway, 48½ miles in length, for railway fares, as shown by its time-table, second class is from 5s. to 10s. per cent. (approximately about 75), and first class from 10s. to 150 per cent. above third class. The return is not quite double the single. The old railway fares were much cheaper than the new third class.

† In Germany returns used to be 1½ pence. But under the new system which took effect on 1st May last they were gradually drawn away with. Second and third class are now exactly ½ the old second and third rates, i.e., they have each been reduced ½. For single tickets now the first is 7 pence, the second 4½, the third 3, and the fourth 2 per kilometre. Nine-pence of the people travel third and fourth.

26727 Mr. Seaton.—It has not been lawful to raise the rates since then?—About six months ago there was a complaint made to the Board of Trade about railway rates, and that book was referred to. The Board of Trade referred the complainant to that book as the legal authority, and that book, which was issued in 1897, and reprinted in 1900, is evidently in force in 1907.

26728 For the sake of expedition I would suggest that when the witness desires to support his general conclusions by detailed proof he should be allowed to hand in any memoranda which he has prepared, or may prepare within a short period, and let them be appended to his own oral evidence.

Chairman.—I quite agree. That is a very good suggestion.

Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—I suppose we shall be supplied with copies of this.

Chairman.—They will be printed with the day's proceedings; not put into the Appendix, but printed as part of the evidence. That will meet your view?

Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—Yes.

26729 Chairman.—After the very good suggestion of Mr. Seaton we can get on more quickly?—Perhaps you will allow me to read this. The statutory maxima are the only protection the trader commonly has. A very high authority quotes Professor Hadley as saying "that the maximum rates are of no use whatever in preventing extortion."

26730 Who is that Professor?—An American Professor, quoted by Mr. Acworth in his book on railways.

26731 By Mr. Acworth?—With approval, in one of his books on railways.

26732 But it is your evidence that I am going to take.

26733 Mr. Acworth.—You must not commit me to saying it was the only protection?—You said it was next to no use in preventing extortion, and that a railway company can perpetrate almost any kind of injustice within the limits of what are called the maximum rates. You quote, with approval, Mr. Hadley as saying that?

26734 Chairman.—I think you have said enough about that. Now let us come to the goods rates. You are of opinion, I see, that service terminals should not be charged as part of the rate?—That is, in a good many instances they should not be charged.

26735 Why?—They are based on the fact that the railway company have gone to a good deal of expense in building, say, stations.

26736 That is in the station terminals. I meant service terminals?—Well, for instance, loading and unloading. That is a service terminal. But in many instances it is the trader himself that loads and unloads, and therefore it should not be charged. I have a great many proofs of that.

26737 Give me one or two if you like, as you say you have many proofs of what you state about service terminals?—The proof that I should like to offer would be the evidence of one of the largest customers of the Midland and the Great Northern. I wrote to him asking him did he load and unload himself, and he said he did, invariably, the unloading himself.

26738 So you know what the traffic was?—The traffic was in substances of a nature for which loading and unloading are not charged, as stone and timber and things of that kind. In the case of another trader the goods are in a higher class. I know it of my own knowledge, too, because I am sometimes at the railway station, and see the employees of the traders themselves unloading. But I also asked the question of one of the largest traders in the neighbourhood, Mr. Delany, of Drogheda, and he told me that they unload themselves. Why, therefore, should a service terminal for unloading be charged?

26739 How do you know it was charged?—Because I have his bills here.

26740 That is what I want. Give me a concrete case where a service terminal has been charged when the service has been habitually performed by the consignee or consignee, and where you have got an analysis of the rate showing that the company has charged for service terminals?—You wish me to give a proof of what, please?

26741 That a service terminal is habitually charged by railway companies without performing any service?—You will infer it from that, that in many of the actual bills I have here the charges are very considerably over the conveyance charges, very considerably be-

yond the maximum rates even, unless the service terminal is included.

26742 I see. That is perfectly plain. Can you just pick out one to let me look at it?—Here is what I put myself on some furniture (document produced).

26743 I see this is 4 cwt. charged at 52s. a ton. Paid on 1s. to pay 11s 6d. Amount paid and signed for. First of all, did you do this service?—My servant did it.

26744 Did the railway company assist?—In that instance I think they did. In that instance.

26745 Do you suggest that this shilling is over the powers of the company?—I do.

26746 That is your statement?—That is my statement.

26747 Mr. Acworth.—That is not what you said before. Beyond the conveyance powers of the company probably?—No; as far as I can make out that item there, it is beyond the maximum which the company can charge, even including that.

26748 The conveyance and the incidence of service terminals?—Yes.

26749 Chairman.—It is—"Sligo, Leitrim, and Northern Counties Railway Company, February 26, 1900. From Gordon of Dublin. A rail-road 40 cwt. 53s per ton; paid on 1s.; to pay, 11s 6d."

26750 Mr. Acworth.—Dublin to what station?—Drogheda. The distance is 149½ miles. You can put it 150 miles.

26751 Chairman.—Now we have got a case, and then we shall have an explanation. Your point is that, as far as you can make out, that 53s. cannot come within the maximum powers unless the service terminal and something more are included?—Yes.

26752 That is your point?—Yes; that is my point.

26753 Mr. Taffoe.—How is that collection charged for?—That collection is charged for separately.

26754 There will be evidence given about that?—The collection is charged for separately. It cost 1s.

26755 Chairman.—You do not know that that shilling was ever collected?—No.

26756 You know it was paid. You do not know what it was for?—No. I infer it. You must expect that, that traders are very reluctant to give information here at all. Mr. Wood, of the Irish Retail Association, also testified to their reluctance. And that is what is to be expected, for they rightly recognise that they are too much in the hands of the railway companies. They cannot fight them, and naturally they do not care to throw down the glove, and that is what it means to come here to give evidence. To my own knowledge, one gentleman who has given evidence here before you has already severely suffered.

26757 Lord Pirrie.—At the hands of the railway company?—At the hands of the railway company.

26758 Chairman.—Will you be so good as to repeat that?—I say that one gentleman who has given evidence before you in this matter, has, in his own opinion, been punished for the evidence he gave.

26759 Lord Pirrie.—By the railway company?—Yes.

26760 Mr. Taffoe.—Should we not get particulars of any charge like that, because I say most positively, on behalf of the railway companies, that nothing of that kind does exist, and that traders are free to make any complaints before the Commission. If anything of that kind is stated should we not get particulars?—I will presently give you the particulars. I asked that gentleman when I met him yesterday, and he said he was going to come before the Commission himself. And another gentleman said he was asked by the County Council to come and give evidence, and he replied—"I am not going to make a martyr of myself," and he has not come.

26761 Chairman.—That is a matter of opinion?—It was his opinion.

26762 But you have given a concrete case?—Yes.

26763 In the earlier part of the proceedings a similar thing was stated, and I ventured to say that I could not believe that anything of that kind could occur.

26764 Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—So far as we know the charge is absolutely without foundation. When the statement is made we ought, in common justice, to get an opportunity of investigating it?—Certainly, I make it openly, on the authority of that gentleman; and I further corroborate it by that instance where the gentleman was reluctant to come here or to give evidence. And I further corroborate

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph Neenan, C.B., representative of the Dublin County Council.

Complaint as to excessive rates for furniture from Dublin to Drogheda.

Alleged hardship on the part of traders to supply labour to the Commission through fear of offending the railway companies concerned.

Instances of a trader having been punished in this way given.

* "The Railway and the Tradesman," 1891 (London, Murray), pp. 332 and 333.

† In the case of a loaded wagon passing over a second Company's line and then being transhipped, the two sets of terminal services will, as a rule, be levied charged in full. Example from Drogheda, G. N. (E.) R. & V. G. W. R., is a case in point.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Est. Joseph
Meehan, c/o,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

Name of the
trader alleged
to have been
prosecuted.

Particulars of
the case.

Instances of
goods rates
alleged to be
in excess of
the railway
company's
maximum
permissible
amount.

it by the attitude of people from whom I asked bills, that I might be able to give some information with regard to the railway companies' charges, and who replied they would have nothing to say to them, because they were not going to assist themselves for the Railway Commission. And they know so much about Railway Commissions that have been held that they do not expect to get any benefits from them to correspond with the time and trouble they would be putting themselves to.

26765. Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—Could we have the name now?

26766. Chairman.—Father Meehan, without any reserve, is about to give the particulars—I will give the particulars. He is a large merchant.—Mr. Crumley, of Eambsay.

26767. He gave evidence here?—Yes.

26768. And in what way do you say that he has been punished?—He can account for the action of the railway company in no way except that.

26769. Lord Pirrie.—Do you mean that he does not get equal treatment?—No. The particular thing is, that for the last ten years Mr. Crumley got at a small rate a season ticket to a number of places in Ireland. He is a very heavy trader, and that ticket was not renewed for him immediately after his giving evidence here before the Railway Commissioners.

26770. Chairman.—That would be what we called a trader's season ticket?—He has had it for the last ten years.

26771. That is a trader's season ticket.

26772. Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—To take him over what line, or between what points?

26773. Chairman.—Of course the reverend gentleman will give us the particulars now that he has got authority. There is no reason why he should not. That is what it comes to.—It was a general ticket over the Great Northern system. He said that he was going to come up to you to mention this matter himself. I said it would be much better for him to come up. Of course it would mean expenditure of time and money on his part. And he has not come.

26774. That is sufficient for you, Mr. Barrington, to make inquiries respecting it. You do not want any more?

26775. Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—Certainly not; that is sufficient.

26776. Chairman.—Then, as to the rates?—You have that list of rates there, and there are a number of them which I cannot reconcile with the maximum rates at all. You see now the first six there, No. 5 accepted, all seem to me to be above the maximum rates allowed.

26777. Just let us have, for the sake of clearness, this case. Take No. 21.—From Sligo to Ballisodare, 4½ miles.

26778. Yes; a ton of cement?—Yes, it cost 5s. 9d. The carriage of that cost 5s. 9d. That is much dearer than cutting.

26779. Are you sure about that 5s. 9d.?—Yes; I have it here.

26780. I want this to be clear, because these are important statements. It is a ton of cement from Sligo to Ballisodare, and the distance is 4½ miles?—Yes.

26781. And the rate per ton actually charged was 5s. 9d.?—Yes.

26782. And you have got the bill there, you say?—I have the bill.

26783. Mr. Croker Barrington, solicitor.—Can you give the date?—The date is given there.

26784. There are three companies running over there?—The bill will make it clear. It is the Midland Great Western.

Mr. Ascroft.—It may be these short distance rates.

Chairman.—If these are these short distance rates it is not a typical case. If these railways are concerned in this they are quite within their powers.

26785. Mr. Tullis.—No, sir, three companies use that line. It is our line, and two other companies run over it?—I think if there is a competition of three companies running to a point a fortiori it ought to be far cheaper than that.

26786. Colonel Hutchinson Pea.—I suggest that this gentleman should give as good proof with regard to glass, Dublin to Buncrana, 2 cwt., £7 10s., 13s. 6d., because I cannot understand that at all.

Chairman.—We will deal with this one first. Mr. Stokes.—Unless the table goes upon the notes the discussion will be very obscure.

Mr. Tullis.—We are short of the date of the present transaction.

Chairman.—December 15, 1906, is the date of the bill. I think the suggestion of Mr. Stokes a capital one, and, instead of my going through all these illustrations, they will be printed in to-day's proceedings as part of the evidence.

Mr. Stokes.—Whatever detail is involved, let that be printed, and let the witness confine himself as far as possible to his general conclusions.

26787. Colonel Hutchinson Pea.—I think there is some mistake about this glass, 2 cwt.?—My point is that in that case you have almost precisely the same amount of glass going in the other direction, and whereas going in one direction the ton rate was £7 10s., going in the other direction it was £2 13s. 6d.

26788. Lord Pirrie.—Is that what you paid?—That was the rate that was actually paid.

26789. The rate per ton?—The rate per ton, £7 10s. for glass.

26790. I cannot understand that at all.

26791. Chairman.—It comes under the small scale.

26792. Colonel Hutchinson Pea.—If you sent a ton of glass you would not be charged that?—It seems to be altogether too high to charge that, but the point I make is to compare it with the glass going in the other direction for about the same amount and almost double the distance at a smaller rate.

26793. Mr. Stokes.—The principle that the trader should pay so much more for a consignment on a small scale hits Ireland at a different angle from England?—Decidedly. I have it from Mr. O'Mahony, of Cork, that from Blarney to Donagade a small consignment of twined worked out at 10s. 4d. per ton.

26794. It runs up very high?—Yes. From Derry to Gweedore the actual rate was 13s. 9d. per ton. A nominal rate is given for the parcels, but the actual rate is much higher than that. In another instance the nominal rate was 4s. 4d., while the actual rate charged was 6s. 9d. per ton.

26795. At the rate of that?—Yes, at the rate of that. You have the rate given for a small quantity as 4s. 4d., and then it works out at 6s. 9d.

26796. Mr. Ascroft.—The usual custom is to quote a tonnage rate, and then, if the thing is small, it is charged so much higher on to the tonnage rate?—I am afraid I do not agree with that, because I have paid rates for small parcels.

26797. Mr. Stokes.—You say that, taking the actual weight of the parcel, the charge made for it works out at a higher rate per ton than it ought to work out at, having regard to the weight?—That is my point. I, of course, allow for the 8d. for handling.

Chairman.—Now, you give a very large number of instances here, and I think we had better print the lot as part of to-day's proceedings.

No. 1.—HIGH RATES.

No. of Ballast.	Name of Railway.	Date of Contract.	From.	To.	Distance in Miles.	Description of Loads.	Weight.	Class.	Station and Service (Maximum for this station excepted).	Date per Ton actually cleared.	Requised Rate per Ton in Pounds.	Contract.	Observations.	Estimate of High grade added on five Irish railways.
1	G. & W.	12/12/96	Slane.	Lagney.	11	Earthwork pipes.	0 15 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	Class 1.	The rates charged in the first & second contracts, and they are in some cases the greatest allowed.	
2	M. & W.	15/12/96	"	Delvendore?	41	Bagg. material.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
3	"	17/12/96	Delvendore.	"	136	Delvendore material.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
4	"	16/12/96	"	Delvendore.	221	Wrought iron.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
5	"	16/12/96	"	Delvendore.	130	Iron pattern.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
6	G. N. & R. Ltd.	26/12/96	"	Dromochore.	140	Portland (rolling stock).	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	Michon.		
7	R. & L.	15/12/96	Slane.	Dromochore.	141	Highland wharf.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	Delvendore.		
8	"	20/12/96	"	Marcorbath.	141	Coal.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	Michon.		
9	"	1/12/96	"	"	141	Bagg. form.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
10	"	15/12/96	Delvendore.	"	141	Gravel.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
11	"	15/12/96	Slane.	Dromochore.	141	Gravel.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		
12	G. N.	26/12/96	Derry.	Marcorbath.	141	Gravel in boxes.	1 0 0 0	1	0 4 0 0	1 7 0 0	1 0 0	"		

* This is not a mistake. The letters HXBlue HDE is the receipted bill indicating the station should be read Haidhaghdere, and not Haidhore.

N₂ 2—HIGH RATES

[illegible]

From the circumstantial change in No 3 it can be inferred, assuming it typical, that the Stationmaster will not forget their driver's name.

The associated railway bill is included above and the original of all the quotations mentioned are in the witness's possession.

Dec. 11, 1967.

Hon. Joseph
Mebane, C. C.,
representative of the
Lebanon
County
District.

Incidents of high grade rates on five Irish railways

No. 3.—THROUGH RATES COMPARED.

Oct. 11, 1907

Rev. Joseph
Keenan, &c.,
representative
Ecc. of the
Leitham
County
Council

Comparison
of through
goods rates

No.	Article	Class	From	To	Distance in Miles	Ton Miles	Observations.
1	Butter,	2	Drumsharr,	London, . .	100	42 5	No. 2 Rate per parcels of 5 cwt. and upwards. If in Class 3, and should Distance be higher than No. 1.
2	Tea,	3	London, . .	Drumsharr,	100	42 5	
3	Tea,	3	Sligo, . . .	London, . .	160	6 8	It necessarily follows from through rate examples that the Irish portion from any Dublin to Sligo is lower than the through rate on Irish goods between the two places named.
4	Eggs,	3	Drumsharr,	Manchester,	200	50 0	O.R.
5	" " " "	3	Manchester,	" " "	200	50 0	O.R.
6	Cotton and Linnen Goods in bulk, or boxes	3	Manchester,	Drumsharr,	200	50 0	By G.W.
7	Cotton and Linnen Goods in bulk or boxes	3	Manchester,	Drumsharr,	200	50 0	Advantage of Irish trade maintained that previously in the market generally afforded palpable advantage. Thus no longer made.
8	Woolen Goods, . .	3	Sarnia, . .	Dungannon,	—	45 7	
9	" " " "	3	" " "	Kilmarney,	—	47 5	The rates under No. 1 suggest the extra cost of every commodity in its bulk and in power districts.
10	" " " "	3	" " "	Trillick, . .	—	48 3	
11	Woolen Goods, . .	3	Sarnia, . .	Trillick, . .	—	49 3	
12	" " " "	3	Manchester,	" (via Dublin)	—	51 4	Made a List.
13	Woolen Goods, . .	3	Manchester,	Trillick (via Dublin)	—	52 4	
14	Eggs,	3	Trillick, . .	Manchester,	—	52 4	By O.R.
15	" " " "	3	" " "	" " "	—	50 0	By O.R.
16	Woolen Goods, . .	3	Sarnia, . .	Dungannon, &c.	—	45 7	
17	" " " "	3	Manchester, . .	Cavan, . .	—	46 10	G.W. By Canal, the 1st.
18	Rum,	—	Manchester,	Liverpool, . .	—	23 5	F. Quotations 1899-1900
19	" " " "	—	Liverpool, . .	Manchester,	—	27 5	

36706 Chairman.—By the by, you did not give us the value of the eggs exported. You gave us the value of the butter, you remember!—Yes.

36707 What is the value of the eggs exported?—This year it is up something, and it approaches nearer £3,000,000, the value of the eggs exported.

36708 Colonel Hutchinson Poo—£3,000,000 is the return just published?—Yes, but while that is the amount of the value of eggs exported from Ireland to England from the Trade and Navigation returns for 1906, which have recently been issued, I see that the amount imported into the United Kingdom is £7,066,137, and I also see that distant Russia sent as many eggs into the United Kingdom as Ireland did. I have some notes here or memoranda on that question, which I want to put pretty closely.

36709 Mr. Sexton.—Will you deal with these memoranda in the same way as with the previous table, and then they can be appended to your own very evidence?—Yes.

36710 What is the source of your information as to the egg traffic?—I got it first from traders, secondly, from an expert in the egg trade, who is also a Dent, and who knows that business thoroughly and was nine or ten years here in Ireland educating the people in that trade.

36711 Chairman.—Then we put this memorandum of yours on the notes.—

MEMORANDUM ON EGG AND POULTRY TRAFFIC.

Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, London and other great English towns are the markets for surplus Irish eggs. The value of those exported in 1904 was £8,168,104; last year it had risen to nearly £3,000,000. Hence, though perhaps an humble, it is an important branch of the Irish produce trade. Furthermore, it is the welfare of the poorest of the poor that is principally concerned. You will observe, therefore, that railway rates directly affect everyone in the land, from the manufacturer, or would-be manufacturer rather, to the little mother housewife whose tin of butter is full or empty according as eggs are up or down in the nearest market.

The first "grievance" I should like to point out is that Irish egg rates are too high, relatively to those of our competitors to the same market. Irish eggs may be valued at £3,000,000, but foreign countries, from Russia to Canada, sent, as shown by the Trade and Navigation returns of 1906, £7,066,137 worth, distant Russia sending into the British Isles almost as many as Ireland sent to England. Excessive rates, those unreasonably merely of and by themselves, need not be so seriously regarded. It is an

* These rates are all per goods ton. They partly include cartage in Ireland, but they generally include delivery in England. They are taken from the Department of Agriculture's rate booklets, kindly loaned to the witness by the Secretary. Every O.R. was quoted, without exception, in three described as "Ex." i.e., exceptional. Why, I cannot clearly make out. At the request of Mr. Sexton, Sir G. Swire, after Mr. Swire, Manager of the London and North-Western, was good enough to supply the Select Committee of Transport (Irish) translated analysis of the through rates for, amongst other commodities, butter and eggs. The through rates he selected as samples were between Dungannon and Manchester and Dungannon and Birmingham, each by two routes, and similarly between Corkwater and both those rates by two routes and by both species of goods. These may be seen in Appendix 69 to the Minutes of Evidence, beginning at page 312.

Comparing these through rates of 1893 with those in the above-mentioned pamphlets, they will be found to be in a penny the allowance as the O.R. rates described as "exceptional" obtaining at the present time. Yet by the railway legislation of 1891 and 1892 the Maximum Statute and Service Terminus in the case (Class 2), or their pre-existent equivalents, were pulled down from 4s to 2s, 6d. (i.e., 1s. 6d. + 1s.).

The old Irish trading master used to tell his "customers" when they would ask upon "coppers" to put upon "pence." The railway companies would really appear to have lost of his people. When they ask upon "pennies" they also upon "coppers." This seems the only possible explanation of the above facts.

accepted commercial principle that, within limits, it does not so much matter to a shipper what his freight charges are as that his competitor has to pay the same rate. This principle holds good for all commodities bought or sold. Here we have an article to put on the market better in favour and freshness than any supplied by our commercial opponents; but we are being hauled out by such excessive comparative rates as the following. They are all ton rates.—

- (1.) M.G.W.—Galway to London (466 miles), O.R., Ex.* 65/6, C.R., 80/10, i.e., 30.7 per cent. higher.

Galway to Birmingham (280 miles), O.R., Ex., 60/6 and 78/4 C.R., 30 per cent. higher.
(1.) Montreal to London (3,086 miles), Glasgow and Dublin, 15/-.

- (2.) M.G.W.—Ballymore to Dublin, O.R., 8 to 8 (130 miles), 25/10 and 28/6. Max. rate = 35/-.

- (3.) Milan to London (via Antwerp and Harwich), 79/5 per truck of 10,000 kilos (about 10 tons), 79/5.

- (3.) B. & L.—Droghda to Manchester (per goods train), 280 miles, C.R., 50/6, O.R., 45/6.
(4.) Vienna to London, 100/3.

- (4.) M.G.W.—Chilten to London, C.R., 97/6, O.R., 66/6, Ex.*

N.B.—C.R.'s rate 50 per cent. higher, cf. Tobincurry and Manchester, etc., etc.

- (4.) Copenhagen and other Danish seaports (steamer to Newcastle and rail to London), 60/6.

- (5.) G. S. & W. R.—Claremorris to London, C.R., 84/2, O.R., 58/4 Ex.*. First 40 per cent. higher.

- (5.) Copenhagen to London (via Hull), 50/6.

- (6.) G. S. & W. R.—Claremorris to Birmingham, C.R., 80/10, and 57/6, Ex.*. 57 per cent. higher.

- By Westport or Sligo, C.R., 78/6, O.R., 61/8, Ex. First 40 per cent. higher.
(6.) Montreal to Manchester, 12/6.

- (7.) Denmark, any port, to London, Birmingham or Nottingham (according to Canningham), 24/6.

It is to be noted that the Vienna to London ton rate (No. 3) holds good for poultry as well as for eggs, in lots of 8 cwt. and that the Danish tariffs (Nos. 4 and 5)—I am unable to say so of the others—carry 3 cwt. and upwards. Consequently the usual explanation, *bag consignments*, is not available. Neither in those later years can the other stock one of better packing and easier handling be very much pressed. Since Irish merchants inevitably send by owner's risk rate, it should not be put forward at all.

It must not, either, be lost sight of that those low freight rates for foreign traffic are to be compared, not with the Irish owner's risk, but with the Irish "ordinary," or C.R. rates. Outside the United Kingdom carrying companies make, I understand, no such distinction. Damages with them are rare, and delays almost never occur. They are much more ready, the witness has it on reliable expert authority, to settle claims when made, and do so without unnecessary wangling and files full of correspondence. This, too, is what, a grocer, is to be expected. They seem to have confidence in the clockwork regularity of their systems and in the carefulness of the employees, in every man doing his own work properly. Safeguarding themselves by such high insurances as a supplementary 30 and 40 per cent., and even 60 per cent. when they themselves retain the fuller responsibility for safe carriage, our railway companies openly confess that they are of opinion that goods travelling over their line have a dangerous time of it, more dangerous, apparently, than a ship's cargo in time of war. Else the effect of such a high premium appears absurd. In the case of eggs, they will not, at some stations, receive them at all at C.R. rates.

Another vexatious matter is that one town finds itself so often at a disadvantage as compared with another. Comparing (a) company with company, and even (b) one branch of the same company with

another branch, and even (c) places on the same branch, one with another, dearer freights may be found ruling for like distances, and even for shorter distances. Of course railway people account for the lower rate by the competitive route. But, on the other hand, the trader explains the higher rate by pointing out that the town penalised is at the mercy of some one company or another, and is, accordingly, being badly treated. Seeing that even competitive rates are high, and non-competitive ones exorbitant, it would seem that the trader has really the best of the argument.

The following, in egg rates, are a few illustrations of the complaint. It equally applies to all classes of merchandise. If it were made the law that the "long haul" rate should not be lower than the short haul under similar conditions, unless where authorised by a power outside the railway company, thus creating some form of discrimination would equally be put a stop to.

EGGS *EX TON.*

A.

G. S. & W.—Limerick to London, C.R., 61/8; O.R., 47/6—426 miles.

M. G. W.—Claremorris to London, C.R., 93/4; O.R., 66/-—430 miles.

M. G. W.—Galway to London (2½ miles shorter than Limerick), C.R., 80/10, O.R., 66/- Ex.*

B.

M. G. W.—Claremorris to London, C.R., 93/4; O.R., 66/-.

M. G. W. & G.N.—Sligo to London, C.R., 60/10; O.R., 52/6.
(About same distance.)

C.

G. S. & W.—Carnock-on-Suir to London via Dublin, O.R., 47/6.
Malton to London via Dublin, O.R., 55/- Ex.*

The hardship of the owner's risk rate comes out most strikingly in this matter. Eggs are more liable to damage than almost any other species of goods. Hence the shipper would be most anxious to insure for them extra carelessness in handling. But the trade itself is so wary, and competition so keen, that his profits would not afford to bear the arch-enriched training charge from Galway to London, e.g. owner's risk rate at 60/- per ton, but the C.R. rate amounts to 90/- 10d. This is within a few decimal points of 50 per cent. higher, or an approach to as much and a half. It is prohibitive, and he has no reasonable alternative but to accept the other and run chance. If the eggs touch their destination safe and sound, well and good. If they arrive damaged he has to put up with the loss. It often means a quarter's labour gone for nothing, for very small people are in this trade.

Unless he can prove "wilful misconduct" and can fasten responsibility on the employees of some one of the carrying companies, he has, in law, no case. Thus across a perfectly proper condition. Without a special directive accompanying them all the way it is out of the question to prove "wilful misconduct." To establish negligence, or even gross negligence, will not suffice. Traders who tried it know this to their cost. Even if the goods do not arrive at all, he has no redress. The signing of the owner's risk agreement note is held to relieve the carriers of all liability for loss, damage, misdelivery, delay, or detention, unless on proof of "wilful misconduct."

Their clear liability and duty is to carry, and carry in safety.

To compare small things with great, the effort to contract themselves out of the responsibility and duty seems not very unlike the action of the seventeenth century statesman who pledged his word to do a certain thing, but who, having previously solemnly stated he would not be bound by anything he promised, set himself at liberty to do as he pleased. The country inspired on them the duty; the country

Oct. 13, 1897,

Rev. Joseph Nathan, M.P., representative of the London County Council.

Memorandum on egg and poultry traffic.

Annexed is a table, from a mileage point of view.

The hardship of the "owner's risk" rates conditions on traders.

* See footnote, page 14.

† Rather, Ballymore to Dublin, O.R. 15/- per ton, C.R. 2/- (Rate Book quotation, M.G.W.). As liability to damage is one of the main reasons that originally categorised goods as the higher charged classes, it is hard to see why this increase should be a second time applied.

‡ See article on "Competitive Rates in Ireland," by witness, in *New Ireland Review*, December, 1901.

Oct 18, 1902.
 Re: Joseph
 Meenan, &c.,
 respondents
 v. the
 Limerick
 County
 Council.

Memorandum
 on egg and
 poultry
 traffic—res.

The Traffic
 Act, 1854
 Sec. 7, the
 liability of
 railway
 companies.

The House of
 Lords' decision
 in "Pack's" case
 (liability for
 damage to
 goods).

alone can release them of it. No individual or Corporation can, by any act of their own, or any subtility, ease themselves of a public duty.

It is, indeed, maintainable that this shirking of responsibility is as indefensible in law as it is in equity.

Section 7 of the Traffic Act of 1854 provides that:

- (a) Every railway company shall be liable for loss or injury
- (b) to live stock or merchandise,
- (c) in the receiving, forwarding, or delivery thereof
- (d) occasioned by neglect or default,
- (e) notwithstanding any notice, condition, or declaration,
- (f) in anywise limiting such liability,
- (g) every such notice being thereby declared to be null and void.

Conditions adjudged reasonable are allowed. A lost case on the interpretation of the above-named section was tried, and was carried eventually to the House of Lords. It is quoted as Pack's case. It was a suit for damages to marble mantelpieces incurred in conveyance. The plaintiff won. The final decision laid down that conditions, affecting agreements must be reasonable in themselves, and special contracts, in their entirety, must be reasonable. That an owner's risk agreement would be void if the exemption from liability were unnecessarily wide—so as to cover felony or gross misconduct—or if no fair alternative were allowed a shipper who desired to retain the responsibility of the company. The owner's risk contract of Irish companies seems to labour under both the one and the other of the invalidating defects—too comprehensive a withdrawal from responsibility and absence of reasonable choice.

However, that decision seems to no longer guide the law courts, and Irish merchants have neither the time to spend nor the thousands to waste fighting the railway companies and pushing on to the House of Lords. Such a law as that embodied in the U. S. Amended Interstate Commerce Act of 1900, and known as the Carmack Amendment, is impressively needed in this country. This new American law provides that carriers receiving inter-State shipments must issue for them a through receipt or bill of lading and become liable for the shipment, no matter on what road the loss or damage occurs. The initial carrier may recover from the company on whose line the loss takes place.

To illustrate the traders' present helpless position I should like to present a typical instance. It is from this county (Limerick), and the case was tried and decided last spring.

Last December, Mr. William Gearty, of Lavagh, Roslary, forwarded (owner's note), Bromed to Liverpool, three crates of eggs. They went by the M.G.W. steamer and L. and N.W. Two reached their destination damaged, the third did not arrive at all, nor has it since formed up. The Liverpool importer, Mr. John McGrath, of 81 John's Market, said the English company for £5 5s. for the total loss of one crate and the damages to the two others. The case was tried in the Liverpool County Court, by Judge Shand. The damages turned on the owner's risk agreement just outlined, rendered by the further contentions that it was the M.G.W., and not they, the L. and N.W., that were the contracting carriers, and that the importer was not the owner, and could not cease interest. In the lack of proof of "wilful misconduct" judgment was given against the plaintiff, with costs, and the proceeding Judge expressed himself perfectly satisfied with both the supplementary depositions.

Prompted by some of the grounds of decision of the Liverpool Judge, the exporter at the other end, Mr. Gearty, started a new case against the M.G.W. in the Roscommon County Court. He won; but on appeal the Judge of Assizes reversed the decision, with costs. Mr. McGrath, as he informed me, had to leave his business and come over to Carrick-on-Shannon as a witness in both instances. The costs were evidently very heavy.

From a consideration of this Limerick case one can infer the enormous trouble and expense that the trader must pluck up courage to face if he is discontent with his treatment, and is unable to bow to the decision of the railway company. Mr. Acworth, in his book "The Railway and the Traders," states

(p. 112) that to assert that the controlling Acts of Parliament [up to 1888] left the traders at the mercy of some despotic railway manager is "awfully ridiculous." However that may be, he seems much nearer the truth when in the same work, written, as he tells us, on the suggestion of the Railway Companies' Association, and from the railway point of view, he says that "for a farmer or shopkeeper, with the assistance, possibly, of the local attorney, to undertake to fight framed railway experts with a lifetime's experience and with every fact and figure at their fingers' ends, is only to court defeat." The traders are perfectly well aware of this, and hence do all their grumbling, and possibly an extra amount of it, outside of the law courts. The number of complaints that appear in print is not a title of the actual complaints.

A little before the above given quotation, I may add, the author of the "Railways and the Traders" warns off all attempts at reductions in charges, unless they are made at the sweet will of the railway people themselves.

"For every shilling cut by an expeditious tribunal of a rate," he writes, "it is easy for railway companies, if they are agreed to cut in harmony with each other [as they do] to withdraw two shillings worth of facilities; and the traders must make up their minds that this is what will inevitably happen if the railway companies are confronted with lower rates simultaneously with a rapid rise of working expenses" [as ever since 1881, when this sentence was penned, they have been].

The deduction from this distinguished opinion seems inevitable, that there is no hope for the betterment of railway rates and facilities unless by State purchase or nationalisation. Otherwise genuine progress appears impossible.

An industry allied to the one that mainly has been just discussed is that of dead poultry. The traders' transport complaints, too high rates absolutely and comparatively, may be inferred from the following table—

A.	
O.R.	
1. Trade to Limerick 112/6 per ton, but Eggs 55/-	
2. Limerick to Liverpool, 67/6 " " 30/10 via Dublin.	
From Falloweaton to Liverpool, 40/- per ton higher for dead poultry.	
3. Droghda to Manchester, Eggs, 45/-, Poultry, 75/-.	
B.	
O.R.	
M.G.W.	
1. Caran to London, 85/- Athlone to London (7½ miles shorter), 107/6	
2. Claremorris to London, via Sligo to London, 126/6	
Dublin, " " 120/-	

C.
 In Ireland dead poultry freights very high, and in many cases double those for eggs. Similar beans and packing, and bulk for bulk same weight.

From the Continent—Daily (via Antwerp and Harwich), 5/6, per ton higher.
 Russia, 7/6 " "
 Styria, Nothing " "
 Canada, 10/- " "

(End of Memo. on Egg and Poultry Traffic)

26602. Chairman.—Speaking generally, what have you got to say about light railways in Ireland? The most obvious fact about them is that they are all financial failures. There are 227 miles of Irish light railways, and they cost £1,173,210, and of the nine that are working as independent units, the receipts total £63,651, but their expenditure amounts to £70,838. That is a deficit of £7,177.

26603 On the lot—On the lot.

26604 Where is the largest deficit from?—Traders

and Dingle line. The receipts are £8,448, whereas the expenditure is £14,667; that is, its expenditure is 175 per cent. of its gross receipts.

26805 Of course most of them are guaranteed?—Guaranteed by the very poorest parts of Ireland, and therefore their failure is felt very bitterly.

26806 You gave us the worst. Can you give us the best?—You will find it, of course, in the railway returns. The latest volume was issued a few days ago.

26807 Now, you seem to have given great study to this question. To what do you attribute the result of the working of these light railways?—Well, there are three main causes in my opinion. First, their too expensive construction, secondly, their expensive working, and thirdly, their indifferent and careless management. Add to that the fact that they are narrow gauge. They are light railways in name alone. They are modelled after the Belgian, but they should be in all respects tramways, not necessarily running along the roads. The Belgian railways cost £3,000 a mile.

26808 What is your authority for that?—An answer given by Mr. Acworth, in his evidence before the Committee on Agricultural Depression.

26809 Mr. Acworth—That was a great many years ago—it was a dozen years ago—but it is substantially accurate?—Yes, it was given in the year 1894. The Irish railways cost £5,168. In Belgium there are no railway stations. There is no station house or station master; there are no elaborate signals; there are no crossing houses.

26810 Chairman—What is a crossing house?—That is where a railway crosses a road you have a crossing house.

26811 A gate house?—A gate house.

26812 Are these worked in all weathers in Belgium in the open?—Yes.

26813 They have no shelter?—Yes, there is a small little place by the side of the road, and I just happen to have a photograph of one in the very centre of a town, and it is simply that the train going up stops there. There is a little notice overhead saying—"This is a railway station."

26814 Or else they would not know that?—Yes. There is no protection whatever. It is usually a bit of a shop, and people go to the shop. I saw that railway station, but here is another photograph with a more typical one. The house is in further from the road than the other, and therefore there is room for the people to stand.

26815 Mr. Acworth—Then they pay a rent to the shopkeeper for the right to let the passengers have shelter in his room?—Yes, but that is not always done, I think, generally so. I went into one of these places, and I asked them that identical question. It was a kind of restaurant. The fact that the people stood about there was sufficiently suggestive to them, perhaps, and sufficiently communicative to the landlady's keeper.

26816 Mr. Serles—Are the fares collected on the trains?—The fares are collected on the trains.

26817 And tickets issued?—And tickets issued. There is no station master whatever except at the very end.

26818 Chairman—Of course these trains, running in that way, require no elaborate stations and waiting rooms and so on?—According to Mr. Acworth, you can run these trains pretty "comfortably" at a rate of 1d. or 2d. a mile. On the Cavan and Leitrim line it costs something like 2s. 3d. a mile.

26819 Do you mean a mile of road?—A train mile. You take the gross expenditure and divide it by the number of miles run.

26820 Mr. Acworth—They run three miles for one that is run in Ireland, and they spread the expense on so much the larger train service. They run an immense number of trains, and you run only three and that makes an immense difference?—But it seems surprising that they should have passengers all the time.

26821 It is much more populous than in this country?—Fitterer—On that identical line they run in the one direction fifteen trains in the day. There is no gain whatever in calling a railway a light railway in Ireland. The sole result is to put restrictions on them. And there is one cause of their failure mentioned by that authority. He says that, whereas an ordinary railway might go almost as it liked, a particular light railway was restricted to

ten miles an hour. Well, the great reason, I think, why the light railways have been a failure is given by that authority that I have mentioned, and I should like to quote it as it falls—"It seems to me that the main cause is, if one might put it so, the difference between what was done in Belgium and what was done in Ireland. In Belgium you have a national company, with experienced men at the head of affairs, controlling the whole thing, seeing that a proper train service is given, seeing that the rules are such as the traffic will go upon, seeing that contracts for supplies and everything of that kind are properly managed. You have a centralised system in the hands of capable persons. In the other case?—"

26822 Chairman—That is the Irish case?—Yes. "In the other case you leave it to a number of local people in remote Irish towns, with no experience whatever of railways, who could not be expected to manage the thing satisfactorily."

26823 Go back to your special district, Drumshair. Is there any need for a railway there to connect those two places—Angins and Drumshair?—There is a very great need for a railway in that quarter, because, in the first place, the district is teeming with mineral wealth, and, in the second place, it is one of the poorest districts in Ireland. Now, the wealth of that district consists of iron mines and coal mines, potter's clay, and flint, and there is no chance whatever for the development of these unless a railway from Angins to Drumshair is made. I have a map which will make plain what I am suggesting.

26824 Mr. Serles—The grant is for small proposed extensions of the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway?—Yes.

26825 This is an independent line of sixteen miles?—Yes, a new suggestion altogether. There is a map specially made by the engineer at the time we were endeavouring to prosecute this railway.

26826 Chairman—This is the promoters' map?—Yes. Rather the Committee of Promoters' map.

26827 With the proposed railway marked?—Yes. The proposed is red. The blue one is the existing Cavan and Leitrim Railway, and the other is the Sligo and Leitrim Railway. The proposal is to connect the termini of the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway to a point on the Sligo and Leitrim line.

26828 Mr. Serles—Drumshair Station?—Drumshair Station, or a spot near it.

26829 Mr. Acworth—Somebody else said it ought to go to Oulough?—Yes.

26830 And somebody else, again, said it ought to go to Boyle?—Yes. But the line to Boyle was no more a rival to these two others than a line to Kantishale. The circles on the map indicate the portions of the coal mines and iron mines, and also the potter's clay.

26831 Chairman—Are those coal mines and iron mines and potter's clay all proved?—Yes.

26832 They know they are there, but they cannot work them?—That has been working off and on since 1641.

26833 What is that?—That is the iron mines—the Angins iron mines.

26834 Lord Parnell—Has Angins coal mines?—Yes. The output as shown by the Mues and Quarren Reports is about 11,000 tons a year. At Drumshair the output is about 2,000 tons a year. That railway will give a chance for the development of the whole mineral area. By the other you get a chance for developing the Angins corner merely.

26835 Mr. Serles—This brings you to the part of Sligo?—That brings you to the part of Sligo.

26836 Chairman—What date was this?—About two years ago. I should say that these circles indicate where the coal and iron have been worked. That whole district is called Shere-ou-leirin—that is, Iron Mountain—and the district is full of iron ore, to my own knowledge. Three times during the last century iron was worked there at Oulough.

26837 Mr. Serles—Commercially?—Commercially.

26838 Chairman—I think, Father Machan, we have pretty well exhausted your proof, and now I will ask you two or three general questions, if you will leave your brief for a minute. What, in your judgment—and you evidently have taken great interest in this question, from the facts and figures you have brought before us—you must have given a large amount of time and study to this question—what, in your opinion, would be the best remedy for this state of things in Ireland?—The best remedy for this state of things would be the purchase, the und-

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph Machan, C.S., represents one of the Leitrim County Council.

Mr. Acworth's opinion in 1894 as to the cause of the financial failure of Irish light railways.

Proposed railway from Angins to Drumshair.

Mineral of iron, and district and industries to be developed.

Mineral resources of the Angins district.

State purchase of the Irish railways and control by an Irish central authority advocated.

Oct. 11, 1907

Mr. Joseph
Meehan, Q.C.,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

State purchase of the
Irish railways
and control
by an Irish
central
authority
advocated—
con.

The Belgian
railway
system recom-
mended as
a model for
Ireland.

ation of all the Irish railways under the control of a representative Irish body.

26838. In other words, that the system that is in operation in Prussia and Belgium and as a great measure in France, State ownership would be in your judgment the best thing for the interests generally of the country?—Yes; State ownership with the qualification that it should be under complete Irish influence and not under British influence.

26839. That is, a body constituted of Irishmen in Ireland to manage the railways for the benefit of Ireland?—For the benefit of Ireland.

26840. Now, you have some knowledge of State ownership?—Yes.

26841. Have you any special knowledge of the Colonies; are you aware of the system in operation in New Zealand and Australia?—Yes. I have read about them, but I have never been there.

26842. Do you know Belgium?—Yes.

26843a. You know Belgium; do you think the prosperity of that country is in any way attributable to the fact that the railways there must be owned by the State?—I think the central fact which makes for the prosperity of Belgium is the fact that the lines of railway and all the means of transit are State owned, and are conducted for the benefit of the country.

26844. And, generally speaking, then, I may take it that your views are—although the railway companies may not be exercising even their maximum powers, the maximum powers given to the railways—the rates for the goods traffic are not adapted to the particular requirements of this country?—They are not adapted to the requirements of the country. We are in a vicious circle with regard to rates and cannot get out of it.

26845. Also, if the passenger fares were brought down to the level?—Of Germany or Belgium.

26846. Yes, Belgium or Germany, to their level, you think it would have a great tendency to improve the industrial conditions of the country?—I believe so.

26846a. I think that is all I need ask you.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson.

26847. With regard to light railways, you said you thought they might be run more like the Belgian tramway system, and not on the roads. If you ran them across the country you would then have to incur considerable additional expense in acquiring land. Whereas, if you had a road of the prescribed width, say eighteen feet outside the line, you would have the advantage of the road, and you need incur no expense for land. I don't see how you could get much improvement if you ran the lines across the country. I think if you ran them along the road you would get away from all the Board of Trade requirements; no crossings and so on, not even fences, you get over the difficulty, and the cost of construction would be very much less than it is at present?—That is one of the costs. Then you must also remember that a vast deal of legal expense was incurred in the making of these lines, and I agree with Mr. Acworth that it came to be perceived it was unnecessary. There were very heavy legal expenses and loss. That was one of the causes that put up the present capitalisation of the Irish light railways.

26848. Let me make this point. You would not get out of the difficulty of future extensions if you carried them across country. You would then have to pay for the acquisition of the land across which they might have to be run?—Of course. But you could only use the road on one side, and you would not have to pay so much for the land. I recognise that Belgium had a distinct advantage in that respect in the great breadth of the roads and also in the fact of it being a very level country.

26849. We have one railway, I think, that is run along the roads, the Clogher Valley, in the North; a great deal of it is run along the roads?—There is also a portion of the Carran and Leitrim line.

26850. There is no objection to that, in your opinion, is there?—There might be some objection, but the corresponding advantages overbalance it.

26850a. As you are aware there are lines of that kind in Belgium, some two or three thousand miles of tramways along the roads without any protection?—It does not make any difference whether you call them light railway or tramway. It is the same thing, except the distinction seems to be made that when a light railway runs along the road it is then called a tramway.

26851. If they are able to run railways along the roads in a densely populated country like Belgium with an increasing population, would it not be possible to run them at an increased speed alongside the roads in a country like Ireland, where the risks would be less, and passenger traffic less, and would it not be far better because we would be able to do without these expensive requirements of the Board of Trade? Would you be in favour of it?—It does seem to work in the case of tramways in towns; there does not seem to be very many accidents, and they seem to have about the same speed as most of the light railways in Ireland.

26852. With regard to safety, I think you said that on the Belgian tramway system, or light railways, whatever you like to call them, they are allowed to go at eighteen miles an hour?—In country districts it is eighteen miles an hour; in towns six.

26853. In Carran they run fourteen miles an hour. So that as regards safety they might go faster and without greater risks if they had them running along side the road?—Yes.

26854. With regard to the body you would put in charge of the administration of the railways in Ireland, you would not, you say, be in favour of handing them over to any Government Department, that is to say, to direct Government administration?—Not to any one of the present Government Departments. I think they are not a great success as it is. They would not be able to do anything additional properly. They cannot do properly the work already imposed upon them, judging from the opinion of the people generally.

26854a. Have you considered at all the constitution and nature of the body to which you would entrust the administration of the nationalised system of Irish railways?—The most representative body at the present time, I think, is the General Committee of the County Councils. And unless a body were specially created by Parliament for the control of the rail ways, I cannot see any other to which you could hand them over.

26855. In the present state of political feeling in this country I am afraid—I do not know whether you would agree with me—that body, the Committee of the County Councils, is more or less constituted by one set of people, of one way of thinking, politically speaking, and there would be, would there not, a danger of pressure being brought to bear from that particular political body upon the Board of railway administration. Would there not be some danger of that?—I don't believe there would be. You must recognise that almost all of this political feeling at the present time in Ireland is tending to bring all the people in Ireland together for the benefit of Ireland.

26856. I wish I could agree with you; I am not so certain of that?—That is, I hope and believe, the trend of it.

26857. I am very glad to hear you say so?—Of course, I don't mean to be in any way personal. It is extremely hard to get prejudices out of some people's minds. An English writer who came over here recently and called upon me, said to me, and afterwards put his opinion in a book, that to get prejudices out of some people's minds is one of the worst of Ireland you would first have to break them.

26858. You speak in this paper of the advantageous way in which the large railway system is worked in Belgium. I don't know whether you have read a little summary by Mr. Pratt, who has written a great deal on the subject?—I read that.

26859. I have seen a very interesting article by a French writer, M. Paschaud; you have seen it, have you? He endeavours to show that the Belgian system is not at all the profitable undertaking that most of us imagined it to be?—That is not my recollection of it.

26860. The article is given in Mr. Pratt's new book?—Just one extract, to point out these errors, on precisely what you are stating, the amount of the profit. I have taken it down in a note-book here. What I want to show you is that in Belgium, whereas in the beginning they worked the lines at a loss, the lines they worked so prospered that now they return a large amount to the State.

26861. That is just the point that he controverts?—I should like to quote that out of the book. That is just the point.

26862. This article gives the official figures?—The official figures are given here.

The advantage of running
light railways
along the
public roads
discussed.

Instances of
Irish light
railways con-
structed in
this fashion

The extensive
exchange of
crossings or
light railways
along the
public roads
of Belgium.

26263 The point is this. These gentlemen—I don't know whether he is right or wrong; I cannot say—he gives official figures, and most of his information is derived from official sources, and he quotes the statement of the Leader of the Opposition on the introduction of the Railway Budget in the Belgian Chamber, and he says there in this article—it is very largely—that, so far from the Belgian lines working at a profit, they do nothing of the kind, that the accounts are so mixed up purposely by the administration, the State administration, as to disguise the fact from the Belgian people, that they really have not been, nor were they likely to make a profit; but that they are working at a loss. He has a strong opinion, that if the figures were given into very different results would be seen. He estimates that if they could be really analysed, so far from being worked at a profit on the present low fares and charges, they would really work out at a loss, and that loss has to be borne by the general taxpayer. That is the whole point of the article.—There is always a risk in taking what any person writes without having a criticism upon it. In the second place tell me what are his figures. I quote from Mr. Pratt's book. He admits the railways contribute largely to the State.

26264 Mr. Ascroft.—Who are you quoting from?

26264a Colonel Hutchinson Peo.—He quotes from the Railway Budget publicly presented to the Chamber, which would probably be optimistic.

Witness.—I am quoting from Mr. Pratt's book.

26265 He modifies that very largely in a subsequent edition.—I imagine that in his book he gives the divergent views. Mine is the edition of last year, and, I think, the last.

26266 I am not going to produce the book. This is an article by a French writer, and he gives official statistics and speeches made by members of the Belgian Chamber criticising very adversely the administration of the system.—I see things quoted now and then in speeches of politicians in the House of Commons. I would be very chary about accepting these things.

26267 These are about the existing railways.—I should like to quote two things precisely upon that. The Belgian railways pay 4 per cent. upon the invested capital of 283,000,000 and have a sinking fund. The railways contributed very largely to the revenue until 1872, inclusive. From 1873 up to 1886 there was an annual deficit owing to extensions, but the deficits were small, and grew smaller every year. In 1888 there was a deficit, it was 2250,000. The deficit in 1875 was 2320,000. This is going into detail; it would be rather long. Then the surplus. In 1887 the surplus was 2460,253.

26268 Mr. Ascroft.—A surplus after what?—After the payment of 4 per cent. dividend and sinking fund.

Colonel Hutchinson Peo.—I don't dispute that for a moment.

26269 Chairman.—Give us the last.—In 1903, the latest date I have, the net surplus is 2367,080.

26270 Lord Pirbright.—A million of money.—Just that. In the seven years ending with 1903 the Belgian railways' net surplus, after deducting 265,455 for the one last year, 1900 (when coal was high), totals £2,573,574. This represents the gain to the State. On one occasion the Minister of Railways openly boasted that it was he that kept all the other departments going.

26271 Colonel Hutchinson Peo.—I don't dispute that for a moment. He quotes from an official return presented to the Belgian Chamber. He says these figures, when gone into, are absolutely misleading and are framed in such a manner that they must know they are not correct.

26272 Chairman.—Please inform me, Colonel Peo. This is the content of a French writer?

Colonel Hutchinson Peo.—Yes, of M. Pechard, who gives official figures taken from official sources. He quotes the Belgian railways accounts, and is most anxious that they should get returns framed in such a manner that they could bear critical investigation?

26273 Chairman.—There can be no question that there is a large surplus after paying interest on the capital to go to the State. Whether it is a million or half a million I don't know.—It is now approaching nearly a million, and the German railways pay over 7 per cent. There is a surplus of over 32 millions.

26274 Colonel Hutchinson Peo.—The German railways are looked upon as a sort of milk cow for the purpose of revenue.—That is one of the reasons why I suggest that we do not want the Irish railways in the hands of the British Government. If they were, eventually they would be a milk cow too.

26275 Mr. Ascroft.—May I correct you. The 32 millions on the Prussian railways is not a surplus in the same sense as you have used it, after paying interest. That is the net revenue after paying working expenses.—That is so. It is not a surplus, and is equivalent to 7-12 per cent on the capital invested.

26276 There is a very large surplus, but nothing like that.—The amount for 1903-4 was 31 millions. For 1903-5 it was 27 millions, and so on.

26277 Since then it has gone up?

26278 Colonel Hutchinson Peo.—Is that 32 million pounds?—Yes.

26279 There is great dissatisfaction among the traders. They object to railways making such a profit out of them. They say they should go on reducing the charges.—That is very natural. We have quoted already a page where they have recognised that, and in view of the profit have reduced the passenger rates, and also reduced the goods rates. The particular system they have, their way of benefiting the country is to give low export rates. That is what we have to contend with.

26280 I see you go on to point out generally that in countries where long distance rates—export rates—are low, the local rates are high.—Local rates. We don't mind so much what local rates are. With them we have to bear. The export rates of Germany are just as low as the service can afford; they want no profit out of them.

26281 That is quite true; in that you are perfectly correct. We are drifting from the point. In Belgium and Germany there has been considerable complaint made that under direct State administration political influences are brought to bear upon the Government to carry such a thing to such a place in which a particular member of Parliament is interested, and in that way they say that there is political pressure exerted to the disadvantage of the country generally.—I quite recognise that. But it seems to be a very happy state of things. If you look at the map of Belgium you will see that every part of the country has been in its turn afforded facilities. Everywhere, all over Belgium. There is no place in the same plight as we have Leinster, no place left out in the cold with no benefit as against it. I consider that a very happy state of things.

26282 Do you consider it fair to compare a country like Belgium and a country like Ireland, one thickly populated a level country, where the cost of construction has been small, the cost of working small, where labour is cheap and fuel is cheap; whereas in this country you have got a hilly country, not a level surface; the cost of transport is much higher owing to the increased cost of coal and labour. All these you have not got. Belgium is happy, because it is very highly developed both agriculturally and industrially.—What you say of Belgium is perfectly true, but allowing for all these differences there still remains a residue of benefit. In Belgium the item of labour is somewhat cheaper, but if we had the same state of things in Ireland we would be pretty well satisfied.

26283 Do you think it will develop under the present system?—I was going to say that Belgium is a highly developed country owing to its railways. If Ireland is not highly developed it is mainly owing to the fact that we have not such railway facilities as Belgium. Under the present system progress is impossible.

26284 Do you think it possible we can ever have a similar development of this country to anything like the extent to which Belgium has been developed?—Decidedly. Let us have such a body controlling the development of the country as existed from 1792 to 1795-6, and it would soon be developed.

26285 It might have been so if that Parliament had continued, but as it is possible, starting handicapped in the race of life as this country now is, with regard especially to great industries, it is possible this country could ever attain to the same roadway as other countries have at our time, in one generation.—Well, you see, this is how we start. We are suffering at the present moment from a great many disadvantages, which are the result of a handicap being put

Oct. 11, 1899.

Rev. Joseph Mathew, C.E.,
representative
of the
Leinster
County
Council.

The large
surplus earned
by the
German State
Railways and
their policy
of granting
low export
rates.

The alleged
danger of
political
influence
affecting the
policy of State
administration
of railways.

The configura-
tion of Bel-
gium and the
condition of
the country
generally
contrasted
with Ireland.

Ireland
alleged to be
capable of
similar de-
velopment to
Belgium
under a House
Government.

Oct. 11, 1907

Rev. Joseph
Moehan, a C
representative
of the
Luttrell
County
Council.

First notice
of the English
Government
in crushing
out Irish
industries
that resulted
from the
English.

upon us for the last 300 or 350 years. The English Government deliberately crushed out all such industries as were supposed to in any way rival English ones. These were most iniquitous Acts. I should like to refer you to a book, the second edition, by Miss Murray, in reference to the financial wrongs done to Ireland by England. She is not a lot of a politician, but an English lady, and the authorities quoted show that she has made great research into the subject. You will find what I have stated is an opinion fully justified.

25695. I quite recognize that. It is not in dispute. My only point is, whether, in one generation, or in the next generation, you think we might have that development—I think development cannot be attained in one generation, nor three generations. It took England 250 or 300 years of protection to reach that point at which she could do without it. She then did away with protection, and did away with protection for Ireland, whether benefiting Ireland or not she did not care a straw. As a matter of fact it did not benefit Ireland, but the reverse.

An appreciable
reduction
in rates and
fares impos-
sible under
the existing
system of
Irish railway
administra-
tion.

25697. Generally, you are entitled that under the existing system of Irish railway administration, where the railways of this country are in the hands of shareholders, who want a return for their money, it is impossible to make such a reduction of charges as will appreciably affect the transport conditions of the country?—I do, and I would refer you again to a report, the supplementary report of the Commission succeeded in the Debutante and it contemplated a large reduction, viz., the adoption of the Belgian scale, and stated that if this reduction were brought about, whilst the companies, for ten or eleven years, would not pay, the gross earnings would show a decrease; still at the end of twelve years you would begin to have a profit in the twelfth year of £50,000—after payment of working charges, cost of increased accommodation, and additional rolling stock, and interest on all capital previously advanced—and in the thirteenth year £90,000. During those twelve years the general public would have paid twelve millions less in general freights and charges than under the then (1887) existing charges.

Chairman.—I think you are wandering from the question put by Colonel Pease.

25698. Colonel Hutchinson Pease.—I think you say that under the present system you could not make a reduction?—No.

25699. Chairman.—You don't expect railways to last. The shareholders must get their dividends?—No. They must be paid.

25700. That is quite fair!—They are doing their best in the management—during their best for making a three or four per cent dividend.

25701. They make the best dividend they can!—That they can; and they repudiate any philanthropy about it at all. They want to make as much as they can.

25702. Colonel Hutchinson Pease.—They don't make an extravagant return at the present time?—No. Still it is a considerable return. It is higher than the English return or the Scottish return.

25703. Very slightly?—Slightly higher.

25704. Mr. Acworth.—If you take off nominal additions it is practically the same.

25705. Chairman.—Yes, if you take off nominal conditions it is practically the same?—(Of course)—I have the exact figures.

25706. O.K., we have got the figures.

25707. Colonel Hutchinson Pease.—I did not propose to ask you any questions about the tables submitted, as to the figures as to the capitalization of the Irish securities, but I have to ask one question. It is with reference to the Preference Securities, which are £2,328,570. You take off 10 per cent, and you assume that £2,491,247 will practically give you the same income as you are getting at present on these securities, less 10 per cent. I think there must be some error. If you look you will see that the present yield of the Preference Stock of Irish Railways on the £2,328,570 is really £213,881. The figure you have taken, the capital value of the new stock, £2,491,000, at 3½ per cent would give £172,000 only; in other words, the Preference Shareholders would lose £41,778 per year, and I put it to you that as the Preference Stock of that six millions, there is Great Northern £1,230,000, Great Southern £1,184,000, Midland, £1,300,000, Belfast and Northern Counties £251,000, and Lough Swilly £50,000?—Look, please, at the Midland Preference Shares there. It is given in the same table. It is paying 2½ interest.

25696. It is the Midland Preference, the old Northern Counties, that is the difference?—I am going to explain to you how it is. I am afraid I have made up these figures myself—and if you put the Midland Preference Shares along with the Preference Shares generally—

25697. That would not be fair?—In the computation of the percentages by the compiler 3½ was the average, I think, look included.

25698. I see what you mean. "Including Midland Preference, and"—?—And I did not include it.

25699. You could not include it. It would not be fair to include it. It is Debutante Stock to all intents and purposes?—You have it there, £3,075,252.

25700. You will find the Midland Shareholders getting on their legs if you propose to reduce it?—I have supposed that. I must misunderstand you.

25701. Chairman.—I am sure you would not suggest that any security should be included, whatever the ultimate result might be to the railways, that their income should be reduced?—I did not recommend that for first-class securities.

25702. Colonel Hutchinson Pease.—I only wanted to go into the matter with a view to clearing up the question. There must be some inaccuracy in compiling the table?—Where the possible inaccuracy has arisen I am trying to explain. In this way I made up that Preference table. I did not know at first how to analyze the Midland capital. Later I came to know the Midland had £3,875,252 of Preference Stock and £1,244,483 Debutante.

25703. O.K., I beg your pardon, did you not include that under your second class securities? Midland Debutante and Preference are both really in the nature of a Debutante Stock?—I see that abstract was sent in on Monday last.

25704. I am quoting from your last abstract?—That is No. 2, Midland Debutante.

25705. Are Preference the same?—No; drop out that. That is a mistake. It is on in No. 6.

25706. Taking your own figures, there is this six millions capital value, and out of that six millions there is five millions paying interest. The Preference of the Midland, you acknowledge, is over three millions, in fact, nearly four millions?—Yes.

25707. You would have to add that?—No, you would not, excuse me. I gave it separately. It is No. 6.

25708. Preference Stock, excluding Northern Counties or Midland Preference Stock, £3,228,500. Then you go on to give the Midland Preference, and it is three millions?—Quite so.

25709. And then?—And then, in No. 6, you give the people who have Midland Preference Stock their present income, less 10 per cent; that will mean in the new 3½ per cent, Irish Railway Stock, £3,401,333, and that will yield the percentage.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

25699. You have quoted, Father Moehan, with approval, what I said a great many years ago about the light railways in Belgium being under central control?—Yes.

25710. I don't know whether you heard Father Gray. He was anxious that this particular little Queen and Leitrim Railway should be under local directors appointed by persons who paid the guarantee—I agree with him so far that that would be an improvement on the present system. I should like to point out that Father Gray did not mention that it is a most anomalous thing to see directors selected from guaranteed shareholders. You have not that in any Corporation in the United Kingdom.

25711. I agree. I want to take the second point. You do not think it might be better than the present, which is not an ideal system, to manage a little local system by local people?—No, it is not an ideal system.

25712. You seem to have sanguine views that if Leitrim could get enough railways it would become a rich district?—Yes. The farming classes would be much benefited, whilst the mining industry would be greatly developed.

25713. Father Gray told us the farmers could not possibly pay their rent unless they received help from their children in America?—I perfectly agree with him, but I am afraid you are losing sight of the fact that if we had railways in Leitrim the gigantic mineral area would be developed. It is teeming with minerals of every description. You will not get

Proposed
method of
capitalizing
Irish Railway
Preference
Stock in the
event of State
purchase.

better iron ore in the United Kingdom. In any time there were several companies who would have gone there and developed it, but that there was no railway communication.

26014. I understand you to say then, that you do not think it is good commercial business to put a large quantity of money into Leitrim to develop agriculture, but that you think the mining industries might be developed. Is that your view?—Not precisely. As in Belgium, the poorer districts should get the first chance. Even for the sake of agriculture, Leitrim has a claim for development. This just exactly bears upon the point—the amount of present loss due to the fact that there is no railway in the particular district that I am attacked to.

26015. I agree. You would be better off if you got one railway?—Yes. This will satisfy you. I make out the annual loss to the district is £25,716, made up in this way—

26016. Let me assume that the figures will bear the closest cross-examination. Your district would be £25,000 a year richer if you had certain railways?—Yes.

26017. Supposing that a railway to suit you were made at a cost of, let us say, £200,000. That would cost more than £25,000 a year for interest on the money?—Yes, I presume it would.*

26018. Would it be reasonable that the United Kingdom, or Ireland, or anybody else should spend, say, £20,000 a year in order to make Leitrim £25,000 richer?—You have lost the £25,000 at the present time, but in six or ten years' time that figure would be increased to £50,000; and sixty years hence it might be doubled. On that principle I think it would be reasonable. The Government should do for this country what other Governments do for their countries. For instance, France made railways that did not pay, not strategical, but purely beneficial ones. If we had a Government, as good as even the French Government, it would have made railways in these districts. Then we should not forget the advantage accruing to the trunk line. According to yourself, and you prove it well, for every £1 gross a branch line carries it contributes 32s. net to the line it joins.

26019. Have you ever looked at the map of the Scotch railways?—Yes.

26020. Are they not infinitely worse off in the Highlands of Scotland than they are in the western districts of Ireland—in the West of Ireland not immensely better served than the corresponding areas in Scotland?—I do not really know, but there are reasons to be taken into account in connection with this. You would want to see the population of the Highland districts as compared with the Western population of Ireland. In the Highlands the population is very sparse, whereas the West of Ireland simply teems with people. The Government has contributed largely, too, to the making of railways in the Highlands of Scotland.

26021. You gave us a reason why Irish railways ought to charge low fares compared with English railways, that the Irish railways only cost £10,000 a mile and the English railways £50,000 a mile. Isn't it universal experience that the low fares are always found on the expensive railways and the high fares on the cheap railways—do you know that?—It is scarcely fair to compare these, because you are going to compare the extremely expensive railways round about the cities with the railways in the country. As a matter of fact, leaving out the workmen's trains, the fares are practically the same all over England, at a mile third class.

26022. Suppose you have got the North Western main line worth £100,000 a mile, and you have got the Midland Great Western line of Ireland worth £10,000 a mile, you will find all over the world that a line like the North Western can afford to charge lower rates than a line like the Midland Great Western?—Of course that is owing to the extra amount of traffic. Initially they could afford it; now they cannot.

26023. Yes, because it gets such a large amount of traffic, so that we ought to expect the Irish fares to be higher?—But when you make all due allowance for that, there will still remain a tendency of blame for

the way we are over-managed here in Ireland, and so on.

26024. Is the traffic small because the rates are high?—That is the radical question for this Commission.

26025. We will not go into the whole question of management. I see you have gone into the question of the Belgian Railways a good deal. You must be aware that a common and pretty well accepted criticism of the Belgian railways is that their service is very old-fashioned and inefficient?—I do not agree.

26026. Have you not seen a great deal of criticism to that effect?—I saw something stated about their being slow, but certainly as compared with the Irish railways they are neither old-fashioned nor slow. I know them myself.

26027. Has your notice been drawn to complaints that their workmen are overworked and underpaid?—I hardly think their complaints are quite as loud as the complaints about the English railways at the present time.

26028. Just one other thing. You are very clear that you want pure, unadulterated Irish management?—Yes.

26029. Is Ireland going to take the whole responsibility, or do you want English help in reference to finding the capital or guaranteeing the capital; or are you prepared to take the whole burden on your own shoulders?—My own impression is that Ireland is prepared to take the whole burden on her own shoulders.

26030. Asking England for nothing?—Yes, asking the Government of the United Kingdom for nothing, and I think it would be most for the benefit of the country.

26031. Then, having got the railways into the hands of an Irish body, you think one way the authority ought to be secured would be by encouraging, by specially low export rates, the development of the farming industry?—Yes.

26032. By helping the Irish farmer to compete with the English farmer and drive him out of the English market?—Let the English railways do as they like with the English farmers. As a matter of fact on the English railways at the present time farm produce is being run at very low rates.

26033. But you would say, give the Irish farm produce an advantage in England that he has not at the present time?—Yes.

26034. Chairman—I think you mean that you would have a lower rate from an island town to a port for export traffic than you would have from some island town to the port if the traffic remained in the port—it should be lower for export than for the local rate. Is that what you mean?—Yes, exactly.

26035. It must be lower than the local rate?—Than the existing through rate. It is lower than the local rate at the present time.

26036. Mr. Asquith—You want it to be still lower?—I want it to be so low that we shall be able to compete with the Canadian, and particularly with the Dane on an equal footing.

26037. And the Englishman?—The Englishman does not so directly come into competition with the Irishman there.

26038. Chairman—I think the witness is quite right.

26039. Mr. Asquith—Let us put it this way. Say you have to pay 40s. for butter to Manchester, and you want it down to 30s. if you can get it. Would you see your power also to protect Irish manufacturers by keeping up the rates on steel coming into Ireland from England that you thought you could manufacture yourselves?—Yes. They are comparatively low enough as it is.

26040. You would be protecting yourselves against England?—Yes, in the matter of manufactures, if you call that protection, merely maintaining the present low import rates.

26041. Could you expect England to take that lying down?—What do you expect England would do?—I think, supposing England would do anything, while Ireland would suffer for a little while, it would eventually turn out for the benefit of Ireland. The same thing happened once when England prohibited the cattle traffic and did not allow the wool to go anywhere except to England, and put prohibitive duties

on 11, 1907

Mr. Joseph
Meehan, C.O.
Secretary
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

The prevalence of low fares on expensive railways and high fares on cheap ones attracted from the medical question for the Commission.

The Belgian railway system is proved.

The management of the Irish railways by a purely Irish body advocated.

The ability of Ireland to provide the capital for the purchase of the railways.

The necessity for low export rates to help the Irish producer to fight foreign competition.

The possibility of any system of protection of Irish manufacturers leading to retaliation by England.

* The line advocated, Arigna to Droghda, would be 16 miles in length. Competent engineers have estimated its cost broad gauge, at £7,500 per mile, or £118,000 in all. The interest on this at 4 per cent. would barely amount to £4,800 a year.

Oct 11, 1903.

Rev. Joseph
Webster, a.n.
representative
of the
London
County
Council.

The possi-
bility of any
system of
protection of
Irish manu-
factures lead-
ing to
retaliation
by England
is not
likely.

ON HIS going into England. That resulted in the birth of our Irish woollen manufactures, which were successful for a long time until England came along again and crushed them.

26040. Chairman.—When was that?—About the year 1675.*

26041a. Chairman.—That is going rather back.

26041. Mr. Aswerik.—Then the Act prohibiting the import of wool was in the end of the 18th century?—Yes, somewhere about that. Seeing then what has been the result in the past, I think England certainly ought to leave Ireland alone, ought to move to interfere with Ireland than with Canada or with Denmark in any way. England ought to recognize that the country has gone so far back mainly through her own acts, she ought to give it a chance at last. Hence, I think it would be a little unreasonable to have any retaliation even under the circumstances you have foreshadowed.

26042. Supposing England were not to take it in quite as quiet a manner as you think they ought to do, which do you think would get the better of it as an economic fight, the big country or the little?—While I believe Ireland would suffer in the immediate future, it would eventually result in a very great gain for Ireland.

Only few
rates (through
and internal)
for Ireland
demanded.

26043. Even supposing they put prohibitive rates on Irish produce coming into England?—Of course in Ireland what we want is something that would be fair, to be put on a fair level with England, but when the through rates are at the present time of this nature that it is cheaper to send goods, say, from Manchester into the heart of Ireland than it is to send goods from one part of Ireland to another, that is where the shoe pinches.

26044. You see you have got to face this. You believe that the great export of Ireland is agricultural produce?—Yes, at the present time.

26045. Practically your sole market is the United Kingdom?—Yes.

26046. On the other hand, England has got all the strength to her law of the whole Continent of Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. We can better afford to quarrel with you than you can afford to quarrel with us in the produce rates.

26046a. Chairman.—I really think this is carrying it too far.

26047. Mr. Sexton.—Oh, if they liked they could drive us into the sea.

26047a. Mr. Aswerik.—I won't ask any more. I have got all I want.

Witness.—I do not think they could do anything worse than they did in the past, when they crushed out Irish manufactures and Irish industries. They even crushed out Irish produce. It had to go to the Continent and everywhere else. They prohibited Ireland, sending its produce to the Colonies. They shut that market too against us. They then described us as a lazy, thriftless, unenterprising pack, adding insult to injury.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

26048. You handed in a memorandum in support of your evidence as to the egg trade, which you show to be nearly as important now as the trade in butter?—Yes.

26048a. Have you prepared any other memoranda in support of your general conclusions?—Yes, I have here a memorandum which establishes this fact, that of all the people in the world the shareholders of the Irish railways should be the most ready to welcome any change which would take them out of their present danger, because their shares are going down very rapidly in value, and there is no prospect of any rise.

26049. You think that, looking to the value of Irish railway securities, the Irish railway shareholders would be fortunate if they were able to transact a sale to the public upon the general basis of present values?—Definitely.

26050. Will you hand in that memorandum?—Certainly.

26051. I understand you have also a memorandum exhibiting possible economies in the general charges, and another summarising the economic and other reasons for holding that there would be great public benefits arising from a united system?—Yes.

(Both Documents as set out below handed in.)

PROPOSED TERMS OF PURCHASE OF RAILWAYS.

TABLE A†

PRESENT CAPITAL.—(Est Dec, 1902)		Average Interest.	New 2½ per Cent. Irish Railway Stock.	
1st CLASS SECURITIES—	£		£	
(1) Debentures,	10,304,800	3 79 —	(1) 11,223,502	In all these the same interest results, besides the better security.
(2) Milled Debentures,	1,344,400			
(3) Guaranteed Stock,	4,929,129		(2) 7,873,908	
(4) Loans,	325,262	4 07 —	(3) 325,814	
2nd CLASS SECURITIES—				
(5) Preference,	4,228,570	3 87 —	(4) 7,870,422	10 per cent has been, before conversion, deducted from the Capital as an equivalent for the better security.
(6) Milled Preference,	1,575,252			
3rd CLASS SECURITIES—				
(7) Ordinary Capital,	14,898,738	3 88 —	(5) 13,461,399	The same deduction and increase interest lowered by 48 per cent to make up for the much increased security.
	£43,624,991	—	£42,465,329	
Present Total Net Receipts,		£1,561,801	Total Interest on Conversion,	
Difference,		£107,280.		

* The correct date is 1663. A still more stringent Cattle Act was passed in 1666. By it all "great cattle," sheep and swine, and also all beef, pork and bacon exported from Ireland into England were rejected, as their importation was "destructive of the welfare of the Kingdom" and "a public nuisance."

The English Act of 1660 was, I think, the first of those prohibiting free wool. It was reinforced, as above indicated, by two separate Acts passed in 1660. The ensuing woollen industry was at length destroyed by the Act of 1793, strengthened by a more rigorous Act the succeeding year. The Irish woollen industry is believed to have been destroyed by the Acts of 1793 and 1794, and the subsequent Acts, the outcome of a protective policy, suppressing Irish trade.

† See Appendix No. F for a similar table based on the later and simpler returns for 1905 recently issued.

On this table of figures I beg to make the following observations.—

(a) In the First Class Securities there is no advantage whatever obtained by the conversion or substitution. By an ordinary corporation or individual loans and debentures are invariably paid off as soon as possible—if it suits. Assuming nothing against it, these could all be got rid of by $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. money. The additional saving would be:—

- (1) £10,804,486 \times 29 per cent. = £3,133 (A)*
 (2) £1,544,403 \times 29 per cent. = £4,399 (A)*
 (3) £305,933 \times 57 per cent. = £1,744 (B)†

Total annual Gain = £7,276

* (A.) i.e., 2 7/8 per cent.—3 1/2 per cent. = 29 per cent.

† (B.) i.e., 4 1/2 per cent.—3 1/2 per cent. = 57 per cent.

Now, the Devonshire Supplementary Commission reported in 1868 "saving by placing the Debenture capital on a uniform rate of interest under Government guarantee £100,000 per annum" (p. 47). As the Debenture capital has in forty years enormously increased, provided the conditions prevailing in 1868, on which the conditions were based, generally obtained to-day, this saving might now, I think, be estimated at about £150,000. However, as Sir G. Finlay's proposal in 1885, the opportunity for this economy, like many another good opportunity presented to the Government, is now gone by. Redeemable Debentures have been long since converted into Stock and into Perpetual Debentures. On this new footing they cannot, I fear, be dealt with otherwise than on the lines indicated. The Devonshire Commission turned out, after all the sittings, an added app.

(b.) The suggested rate of interest— $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.—is high. More Irish $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Trustee Corporation Stocks are at the present time oscillating but a very little on either side of par. Last year, for instance, in Boltons, the fourth issue of £446,640 redeemable in 1882, varied between 101 1/2 and 99 1/2, the sixth issue of £370,550, redeemable 1815 55, between 101 1/2 and 100 1/2; Cork Corporation Stock, notwithstanding the drawback of being a smaller amount, £162,300, and its lottery condition of redemption by drawings, during the same year, was never lower than 99 1/2, and was as high as 101. Contrasting these with the proposed Irish Railway Stock yielding the old-rate interest, these would be four or five important financial facts in the latter's favour. Firstly, the immensely larger amount, over forty-two millions. Secondly, its stability and unredeemable character, not even a sinking fund affecting it. (No railway in the United Kingdom or the United States, it should be noted, has a sinking fund. Quite the contrary. Last half-year the Great Southern and Western added £63,551 to its capital account; the Great Northern, extending subscriptions for new lines, £40,668. And so it goes on from half-year to half-year—no attractive spectacle to the ordinary shareholders.) Thirdly, the smallness of the amount that might be expected to be offered for subscription to the general public. Fourthly, the immeasurably better security.

Corporation Stocks are as an index to the credit of the towns. The credit of country as well as of town is very good. A single fact will test it, the price of Belfast Guaranteed Light Railway Shares. Even though two-thirds of the working companies do not pay their working expenses, yet the shares will be found to be a long way above par. Caran and Leitrim Railway Shares, for instance, are scarcely obtainable under 40 per cent. premium. They seldom can be had at all. They were no lower in 1895 than in 1862. Yet the Leitrim peasant guarantees are among the poorest of the poor in Ireland, living for the most part in scheduled congested areas.

In view of these facts it becomes a question for experts in the money market whether theoretically the whole forty-two millions could not be floated at

$\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. But it must be remarked, offering it at any higher or lower rate of interest than $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. would make no material change in the figures of the net annual gain given above. Later, however, when, as is likely, money becomes cheaper, a still further advance could be made. As the Government floated a $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. loan, and with it brought out its 5 or $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. creditors, and so had brought, step by step, the interest down from 6 per cent., so when confidence would have become secured, by experience and by a wider diffusion of knowledge, a loan on a $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. or possibly 3 per cent. basis could be effected by the same authorities that would have made the first. Every quarter per cent. taken off would mean a further annual reduction of £105,327. At the present time in Irish saving banks and Irish Joint Stock banks there is a large amount of money invested yielding only from 1 to 2 or $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. According to Lord Darnley the total amount so lying practically idle has been estimated at about £60,000,000. As good security as that of any Irish bank is here forthcoming. It would evidently be good statesmanship to make as many people as possible interested in the peace and prosperity of the country.

(c.) Number 7 in the above table seems almost the only item which can give rise to any serious difference of opinion. The arithmetical computation on which the named average rates of interest in "Railway Returns" (p. xxiv.), is based, would imply totally wiping out the owners of the present non-productive railway capital. They hold £1,682,478 Ordinary Capital and £1,233,750 made up of Loans, Debentures, Preference and Guaranteed. For all this they would receive no equivalent in the above suggested new Irish Railway Stock.

On the other hand, as Irish railway director, Mr. Crowley, writing in the *Press* in the beginning of last year (February 5th, 1896), suggested that in $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Government Stock the first-named class of security might merely be cut down by three-fourths, all the latter classes by one-half. (This is exactly Finlay's thought, though he states each case would have to be adjudged on its merits). No doubt this would more readily meet with the approval of the present owners. But what one must look to is what is fair and right.

Now, it is evident that all this capital has no present value. Looking to the sinking in Stock Exchange quotations of railway securities in past years as well as to their unimproving prospects, under existing railway conditions in Ireland, in the future it is equally manifest it cannot be expected to become of value. Much of it, too, may have exchanged hands at a very low figure—purchased as a speculation. Holders of such cannot complain if it is irretrievably blotted out. Millions, for instance, have been lost, as well as gained, on South Australian Gold Mines. If South Australia purposed acquiring itself and closing up all its mines it would be childish to dream of proposing that it should pay 10 per cent. or even one per cent. for £200 shares that never paid a penny of genuine interest, and that could not be expected to pay a penny in a blue moon. There would be no appeal ad misericordiam. This case comes on all fours with the Irish railway case above mentioned.

(d.) There is one ignored class of claims which seem at least as good, viz., that of Railway Guarantees. Here and there through Ireland these gentlemen pledged themselves to certain obligations in certain contingencies which they were invariably induced to believe were very remote. They did so on the express condition that should they ever have to meet these obligations they would have a lien on the railway's future profits for a refund of every penny. Thus the assistance given was to all intents and purposes a loan. It seems, therefore, quite as equitable to suggest that the full amount of these loans should be—in the case of Sligo and Leitrim Railway Guarantees it is £265,000; in the case of the Leitrim Guarantees of the Caran and Leitrim Railway it is, up to 1895, £29,475—should be represented by 50 per cent. of the sum total in the Irish stock to be created. Certainly if one is not to be confounded neither should the other.

Oct. 11, 1890
 Rev. Joseph
 Mooney, O.C.,
 representative
 of the
 Leitrim
 County
 Council.

Memorandum
 re proposed
 terms of
 purchase of
 Irish railways
 —con.;

Rate of
 interest for
 new stock is
 suggested by
 Mr. Crowley,
 as Irish railway
 director.

Irish railway
 guarantees

* From Appendix to Reports of Commissioners of Public Works, 1871 to 1894, both included.

Oct. 12, 1907.

Rev. Joseph
Hickson, & Co.,
solicitors-at-law,
of the
Lancaster
County
Council.

If any value is to be set on Irish railway dead capital against its mere possession I should not advocate anything higher than the following:—

TABLE B.

Irish Railway Capital paid to Dividend.	£	Per Cent	Equivalent New Irish Railway 2½ per Cent Stock
(1) Loans and Debentures,	68,300	10	6,830
(2) Preference and Guaranteed,	1,145,600	—	114,560
(3) Ordinary,	1,639,078	5	81,954
Total,	2,852,978	—	263,344
(4) Amounts paid up by Railway Companies (pay),	200,000	10	20,000
Total,	3,052,978	—	283,344

Interest in 2½ per Cent. = £7,582

(c.) Of the non-paying capital opposite Number 1 above, except the small amount of £200 debited to the Dublin and Kingstown, the pioneer line, which used in the eighteen to pay 9½ on its Ordinary shares, all is shown against one railway. Making the suggested exchange would mean an approach towards having this present dead capital yield the same rate (1½ per cent.) that £70,981 of its similar capital has only been able to return. It could scarcely, therefore, be regarded as a bad exchange.

Of loan capital there is but this £70,981 yielding a dividend not above 2 per cent.

Of preferential and guaranteed there is none—the amount in Table B always excepted—yielding less than 5 per cent., and but £231,344 yielding as little, 6½ per cent. of it shows a dividend of from 4 to 6 per cent.

Finally, of Ordinary stock there is but the insignificant amount of £114,114 whose annual return is not above 2 per cent.

It is accordingly apparent on this analysis that the task of conversion would be easy, and that there is room for very little reclamation. No one is harmed. Exchange of shares for a sound investment would scarcely be refused by anybody. The security, that of the anticipated lines themselves and of the whole of the valuable property of Ireland—about £15,000,000 in value—is immeasurably superior to that of the best existing Irish or English railway security.

Putting the gross interests shown in Tables A and B together it will be seen that the approximate saving effected works out as follows:—

As the net receipts since 1895 (counting the exceptionally bad year, 1901) have not varied £100,000 between highest and lowest, and as the net receipts for 1905, as given in the last issued "Railway Returns," are about the average, they may fairly be taken for purposes of comparison.

TABLE C.

Net receipts, 1905,	£ 1,581,801
Interest, Table A,	£ 214,581
" " B,	7,582
Saving per year =	£ 359,738

MEMORANDUM ON THE PRESENT POSITION OF IRISH RAILWAY SECURITIES

The conviction seems inevitable that Irish railway shareholders should be the part of the community most anxious for nationalisation, or for any re-arrangement that would help them step out of their present dangers. The expenses of working are going up every year, receipts but a little. In Ireland working expenditure in 1899, equalled 54 per cent. of gross receipts; in 1905, 62 per cent. It is

an open secret that some railways have to exert themselves to their uttermost and beyond it to stave off the destruction of their Preference capital as a Trustee security. Under present conditions the inevitable must happen sooner or later, and then there is not an likelihood of a *renouveau* put stamped among the ordinary shareholders.

The distinct discussion of matters of more public notoriety cannot injure any investment. Looking to the three largest and most promising of our railways, the three whose annual receipts from all sources exceed £1,000,000—for the general principle at once emerges from an examination of the authoritative returns that the bigger the railway the better its chance—the rapidity of the fall in the market price of the shares for the past seven years is a matter of the gravest moment. I beg to present it.

ORDINARY STOCK.

Great Northern Railway.	Highest Price.	Lowest Price.	Latest Price— Reported per Cent.
1894,	£ 150½	£ 160½	£ £ s. d. (August 28th) 145 . . . 4 9 9
1904,	150½	145	
Decline,	= 5½	15½	(October 10th) 148 . . . 6 11 7
1907,	154	148½	

(Therefore still decreasing.)

Midland Great Western Railway.	Highest Price.	Lowest Price.	Latest Price— Yield per Cent.
1896,	£ 110½	£ 100	£ £ s. d. (August 28th) 50 . . . 5 1 9
1906,	70	55	
Decline,	= 40½	45	(October 10th) 52½ . . . 5 8 1
1907,	64½	59½	

(—It seems still on the down grade.)

Great Southern & Western Railway.	Highest Price.	Lowest Price.	Latest Price— Yield per Cent.
1899,	£ 130½	£ 120½	£ £ s. d. (August 28th) 84½ . . . 5 3 6
1905,	84½	80	
Decline,	= 4½	45½	(10th October) 82½ . . . 5 2 7
1907,	89½	82½	

This table needs no comment. If £4 11s 7d. per cent. in the Great Northern and over £5 per cent. in each of the other two can scarcely tempt capitalists, it is obvious that public confidence is going or gone. Ordinary Shares are the best test of an investor's opinion.

It is true that a great many Government securities from 2½ per Cent. Consols to 3½ per Cent. Guaranteed Land Stock have also shrunk in price. Whether there be sufficient causes operating to lower them is a question mainly for politicians. It is beyond question, at all events, as one of them, that money has become dearer, and its earning power greater. But this fact falls a long way short of accounting for such "slumps" as from 1894 to 145, or from 110½ to 55½.

To get very roughly at the portion of the "slump" due to the appreciation of the price of money seems not impossible. Assuming that the total fall in Irish Railway Guaranteed Shares within the same period is exclusively on account of this factor (though many other causes are operating), we may arrive at

Comparison
of average
net receipts
with interest
payable on
proposed new
stock.

Memorandum
on Irish
Railway
Securities.

in New, Owen and Leitrim Railway Guaranteed 55 shares, for example, sunk from 7 11-16 (highest price, 1889) to 6½ (lowest price, 1906), i.e., by a total of 1 1-16. The corresponding fall in £100 shares would be 21½. Similarly, taking highest and lowest within the same period, Great Northern Shares sunk, as we have just seen, 36½; Midland Great Western, 55½; and Great Southern and Western, 54½. Consequently, on the above supposition (which is altogether too favourable to them) there is a net residual loss in these three railways respectively of 14½, 33½, and 37½, which is to be set down to causes other than the present dearth of money.

Any other method of comparing these figures will be found to bring about equally disturbing results. Preference and Debenture Stock are dropping in price in sympathy with the ordinary Stock. It is a "stamp" all round in Irish railway investments. English railway capital is, too, falling naturally, I admit, but at a comparatively slow pace. The price of shares or of stock is the best index of the investor's forecast. Then this opinion nothing better can, I think, be obtained. Neither politics nor philanthropy interfere with his judgment. His estimate of the future of the country is, in the end, the main basis on which he forms it. In the opinion, therefore, of those hardheaded business men there is, under existing conditions, but a blue look-out for prosperity in the country in general or in our railway systems in particular.

If the foregoing statements cannot be overturned, a necessary conclusion follows. Should it be proposed that Irish railroad capital of every description be taken over at the present market quotation every shareholder should jump at the offer and have no Falkenstein talk about "compulsion." The security that his present capital would no further come and melt away before his eyes, should prove glad tidings to him and fully compensate for the compulsion. Any malabellous resistance would, I am convinced, be the more welcome of the harbinger's instincts.

MEMORANDUM ON POSSIBLE ECONOMIES BY UNITED WORKING.

Since the Act of 1867 railway book-keeping, under the direction of the Board of Trade, has the same features in all companies. Under the heading "General Charges" are arranged in a stereotyped order substantially the same items. First invariably comes—

Directors' Fees.

Railway.	Number of Directors.	Total Fees per year.
(a.) Great Northern,	12	£4,000
(b.) M. G. W.,	7	£3,000
(c.) G. S. and W.,	12	£5,000

and so on for most of the 41 or 42 registered railway companies or the two dozen working companies, with their battalions of directors, 300 or so strong. Every little midget railway in Ireland is in its management a replica of the London and North-Western. The microscopic Limerick and Ballymacorney line, of nine miles, for instance, has, I make no doubt, a Board of Directors as well as the best of them, to apportion out its £2,300 or so annual turnover. The Blunham, Clapham Valley Company certainly enjoys the guidance of sixteen of these gentlemen, or one to every £500 of its gross receipts. The Midland of England has one to about every £10,000 gross receipts, and they are sent to all work, i.e., in the main they attend the monthly meetings fairly regularly and do some talking.

We do not assume that the whole regiment of Irish directors are each as well remunerated as the thirty-one of them above specified. The latter get £12,000 between them, an average of almost £400 each. But with these figures and also the gross receipts for each of these companies, and for all Irish railway companies, before us, on the somewhat bold assumption that the emoluments bear some kind of

proportion to those returns, if we shrink the trouble of finding it out exactly, it will be, on all events, a good deal more than a guess to put down £20,000 a year as the total for fees* and free passes. This, I submit, is a wasteful and useless expenditure. Even a very friendly railway witness in 1885, Sir G. Findlay (Q. 11533), gave the seemingly anonymous reply "that it is not a waste of money," because the Irish directors do not do a great deal." "It seems to me monstrous," declared Lord Inchiquin, himself one time a director, "that there should be so many Boards and Directors."† Another Director of Boards and Directors, and whose name and vastly greater experience and whose name and honesty commanded the highest respect in Ireland, was equally emphatic. "On the face of it," he asserted, "it is absurd, and so absurd that I think it is one of the great causes of the mismanagement of the Irish railways and the want of dividend earnings."‡ The gross receipts of the Midland (England) for 1905 amounted to £12,436,636; the dividends cost £9,992. Did the Great Northern's directors remunerate themselves on the same scale they would have not £4,000, but less than £750—not each, but to distribute between the whole twelve of them. On the same sufficiently liberal basis of wealthy England, seventy-one directors of Irish railways, and the united companies' directors' fees in two would not fully reach the amount apportioned by the Midland Great Western's high officials—£3,000 a year. The change suggested would imply their total wiping out. This, besides the unhampering of guidance, which must be pottering about to show it is doing something, would mean a direct saving of the £20,000 a year mentioned, or capitalised at the rate of interest indicated for the purchase, a gross saving of £271,428. There is hardly anybody in Ireland but recognises that the directors are mainly or almost entirely ornamental. It is the managers that rule and guide the ships.

Again, the auditing of the accounts of the three main Irish companies saved costs £600 a year. Auditing for the remaining twenty-one working companies (or, I believe, twenty-two, since the extinction of the Donegal company), can scarcely cost less than another £1,000. If united the audit of the whole of them would be immensely easier. On the basis of the Midland it should not mean an outlay of £500 a year. Here is an opportunity for a clear annual saving of about another £1,000, and no treading upon anybody's toes. In proportion to its gross receipts the auditing of the little Cavan and Leitrim Railway costs 65 times as much as either the Midland of England or of Ireland.

Further, Irish Clearing House expenses might, I think, in the new order of things be reduced by 90 per cent., i.e., by £10,000 a year, the ninety-five secretaries cut down to half-a-dozen, office and advertising expenses readily pulled down 40 or 50 per cent. without affecting their present efficiency; legal and Parliamentary expenses—in 1905 they totalled £33,715 (a single English railway company is said to have spent £200,000 in nine years under this heading)—almost entirely done away with.

In fact, looking carefully into the items of the "general charges" of such English railways as the Midland or the Great Western, and examining those items that do not appear in our railways at all, the sum total of these charges on a moderate calculation might confidently be expected to be halved, thereby effecting a saving of about £67,500 a year.

This conclusion will be confirmed by examining separately the expenditure of such second-class British railways as have a volume of traffic almost as small as that of all the Irish railways put together, the Great Central, for instance, or the Great Northern, or the Caledonian or the North British. Indeed, if one places side by side the sum totals of the gross receipts for Scotland and for Ireland, and on the other hand side by side the sum totals of their respective general charges, the statistics suggest the evidence of an all round lack of economy under this heading in this country. In 1905, while the gross receipts of Scottish and of Irish railways were respectively £12,460,636 and £4,164,678, i.e., as 3 is to 1, the general charges were respectively, £227,913

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph Moohan, C.E., representative of the Leitrim County Council.

Witnessed on possible economies by united working.

Auditing of accounts.

Clearing House expenses.

Legal and Parliamentary expenses.

* Mr. Ballour Brown gives £18,000 per annum as the total amount of fees, V. Q. 2675.

† Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, Q. 16108.

‡ Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, Q. 15632.

Oct. 11, 1897.

Rev. Joseph
Hechan, C.E.,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

Memorandum
on possible
economies
by well
working—con.

and £135,012, or in the ratio of 2 to 1. Looking back to the returns for past years these ratios are seen to be, roughly speaking, constants. Perhaps, however, this apparent Irish extravagance may be set down to the fact that whereas in Scotland there are but eight corporations all told, the little six working railways in Ireland roughly just double that number, or, if we take in light railways, exactly triple it. Should this explanation be deemed satisfactory it also goes to support Irish amalgamation. If unsatisfactory the Irish directors, to whom I leave it, may not find it too easy to account for the striking discrepancy.

Under "Expenditure," barely one of the five abstracts of Section 13 has been touched upon, viz., Abstract E. But if one takes up any Irish railway directors' report and goes scrupulously through the whole five of them, from Abstract A to Abstract E, he will find in each of them and in vast stores of each large opportunities for retrenchment in a unified system. The economies, instead of lowering, would all make for increased efficiency. Among the more obvious to a layman are the following—

Management
experts.

Of the twenty-four managers, each with his branch of clerks and superintendents for this and that, fully a score of them and most of the following of each would no longer be needed. On this subject, Sir George Findlay expressed an opinion which is quite apropos, but which, as a quotation, is by this time a bit hackneyed. He also stated in his examination before the Select Committee of Industries (Ireland) (Q. 11032), that there could be no difficulty whatever in managing the whole of the (Irish) railways by one board of directors, one manager, and one locomotive superintendent. We could have no better authority. If this represents the truth of the matter the services of twenty-three managers could be dispensed with, and with these quite as many engineers, and double the number of general superintendents and other high-salaried officials. "The management of such a line as the North-Western or the Midland, or the Great Western," asserted Mr. Griesmer, "of course is incomparably more difficult than would be the management of the whole of the Irish railways put together."

By this I must not be understood to imply any disrespect whatever to these gentlemen. Quite the contrary. In the extremely difficult circumstances in which the managers find themselves, they are, as far as can be made out, doing well. Not even the distinguished railway official just mentioned could, if in the shoes of many of them, do much better. He tried what could be done for Mr. Beasely in the case of the old Irvinstown to Ballyshannon Railway of 37 miles, and had to confess himself beaten. A few thousand per annum was all it returned on the immense outlay of "£300,000 in hard savings" for twenty years. The end and object of the railway corporations in this country is to make money. They are business companies pure and simple, gathering gear by every means justified by the railway rate-book, and they would rather repudiate a hint of philanthropy. That policy the railway managers faithfully carry out. The goal before their eyes from January to June and June to December is the dividend of the half-year's end. That dividend is the measure of their success. With the population rapidly sinking, farming industries, our sole reliance, haled in by foreign competition, and scarcely paying, and labour becoming organized and dearest, it is with the best of them no continued strain to keep up the 3 or 4 per cent. With all of them the strain is yearly intensifying. There can be no doubtful experiment. To foster infant industries by serious concessions, or to so bolster up dying ones might be very wise, might be but as throwing bread upon the waters. But their successors, and not they, would be likely to eat of the returning crusts. This is more directly the duty of the State, and State-owned railways alone will ever effectively perform it. The management of the Irish railways is excellent for its immediate purpose—the extraction of money out of the pockets of the public. If it has not extracted more of it, it is not its fault. And it is to be said in its favour that if Irish railways are in straits,

and obliged to live up to high endeavour, so also, as Mr. Asworth testifies, is almost every railway in Great Britain that is mainly depending, as they are, on a rural population. "There is hardly a single company in the United Kingdom," testifies this authority, "dependent solely for its livelihood on the traffic of country districts that is a reasonably profitable undertaking to-day." An equally distinguished railway authority (Griesmer) once stated that a district could have no heavier curse than a poor railway. In Ireland we are not blessed; they are practically all poor, and simply fighting for dear life.

Another economic benefit would be that supplies of all kinds, from coal and wagon covers to oil and tallow, could be purchased wholesale, and not, as Mr. Field, M.P., so graphically put it, "in drabs and drabs." "In small railways," according to a director of two of the leading Irish ones, "the charges for getting supplies of iron, coal, and stores are enormous."

A third saving—As the present rolling stock would be available at any point from Belfast to Bantry where a crash might be anticipated, its utility could be increased perhaps by ten or twenty per cent. This, too, would be a great benefit to the public. They have frequently to complain of shortages of wagons. We might then be saved from the spectacle of the Midland Great Western requesting the date of the great long-established Ballinacorney fair to be changed because it found it difficult to cope with the traffic. Further, repairs could be more cheaply carried out, and all new wagons, vans, trucks, when required, be built in the country. This would be both a benefit in pounds, shillings, and pence to the railways themselves and a benefit to the Irish public by the creation of new industries. All small companies now import their engines and carriages. They cannot do otherwise.

A fourth saving would be putting an end to economic waste in transit. This gain would be very important. Goods and passengers would for the future be at liberty to take the shortest route. Every company now tries all it can to keep its traffic, both of one and the other to itself. If, Maye pigs, for example, bound for England, once get boarding a Great Southern and Western train, they will have a long circular tour, via Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford, and Wexford, on to Milford, instead of turning sensibly at Clonsilla or Athlery, and taking the short cut to Dublin. The latter route is less in length by considerably over 100 miles. The tariffs by either way are, owing to Clarence House tactics, about the same, but the actual cost of haulage to the railway company in carrying them enormously the animals to Milford, or, perhaps, now to Roskilde (if pigs be allowed that way), approaches double what it would be if they went the first turning to Dublin. Here is a sample of economic waste occurring all over Ireland every day in the week. The G.N. strives to direct its whole volume of traffic to Belfast or Greenore; the M.G.W. to Dublin. The rivals may have the shorter routes, but change to them is so well hampered by delays, transshipments, new bookings, and by every possible inconvenience that can be thrown in the way, that it is practically impossible to achieve it. Every unnecessary mile travelled means money thrown away. In a unified system the whole procedure would be revolutionized.

Not only might be saved, but the expense of many unnecessary trains might be got rid of as to be. For goods for export to England, for example, there is no apparent reason why all the traffic of the West, and even of the North-west, including Leitrim, should not be sent alternately to Athlone or Mullingar as a centre, and again to Coleraine as a centre, to go by the present G.N. road. It is a well-known railway maxim that one large train is cheaper than two small ones, each of half the weight. Now the trains are comparatively small. They are also slow, in an effort to cut down expense, and this slowness seriously affects the great bulk of the traffic, which is of a perishable nature. Danish butter and eggs en route to the London markets from Newcastle (272 miles) or Hull (205 miles) were conveyed at the rate of 27 or 28 miles per hour twenty years ago. The Scottish

* Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, Q. 10574.

† Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, Q. 10676.

"Meat and Fish" trains went from Corkish at over 40 miles an hour. No published time tables are available for Irish goods trains—it would be an advantage to the public if they were—but it is safe to say the average speed does not exceed 20 or 18 miles per hour.* Probably in the Western and North Western areas catered for by the four railways, the M.G.W., the G.S. and W., the S. and L., and the C. and L. Railways, the expenses of two, or the equivalent of two, 100 mile goods trains per day could be saved by the new and strange perfectly harmonious working necessarily resulting from amalgamation of all roads, and this without decreasing the present facilities.

Now, on the last published railway statistics basis, an Irish train going 100 miles costs 100×33.978 , or $\$34.36$ 1d. On a very moderate calculation, looking to all Ireland, ten such trains might be done without. As in the case of minerals in England, there is a large and constant flow of traffic in one direction to obstruct this. Ten such trains dropped would mean a curtailment in expenditure of over $\$141$ per day, or of the large amount of $\$44,000$ per year.† If, as seems not impossible, ten more such trains of the many proceeding in the reverse direction—i.e., starting from Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Ennis, Limerick, etc., might be omitted, this large amount might be doubled. As to passenger trains, taking it that similar conditions govern in other districts as obtain in that with which the witness is acquainted, it would seem not unlikely that another ten such trains in all, including "down" and "up" ones, would be un-needed. If so, the amount must be trebled. The annual saving would then reach the respectable sum of $\$132,000$.

On the accuracy of these figures the witness naturally does not overmuch rely. They are at least suggestive. If it were merely allowed that but one train per day would be dropped, then the saving would be $\$14,400$ a year, and $\$4,401$ is a sum by no means to be despised. Further, there would be in any or other, save the immense gain of less trans-shipment, and less handling of half-loaded wagons. Every trans-shipment omitted would be considered by the best railway authorities as good as a shortening of the haulage by twenty miles.

A fifth saving would be effected by the diminution of Junction Expenses.

An example or two will best show the existing extravagance. Collesy in a town—six towns are named in Ireland—of 371 inhabitants. Within about half a mile of each other it has three separate railway stations, owned by three separate railway companies, the S. and L., the M.G.W., and the G.S. and W. Each station has its stationmaster and his three or four subordinates. There is besides a donkey engine, with its driver and "choofboy," constantly coming between the three stations, at a joint expense to the three companies of, I have authority for saying, $\$1,200$ a year. It conveys goods, and sometimes passengers, from one station to another. Passengers generally walk, or, if they have a stray shilling about them, go on a couple of miles further to Ballinacorney, by which all trains pass, and then return on their steps. One joint station, one stationmaster, less than half the officials, and no donkey engine should meet all the requirements of the case, and vastly improve the facilities all round.

Again, at Cavan, the G.S. and M.G.W. have a joint terminus. But trans-shipment is practically unavoidable, and each company has its own goods vans, with its own stationmaster and his staff of officials, a dozen or so in number. The last but one half-yearly report of the M.G.W. shows an expenditure of $\$1,087$ for goods sidings at this station. At Strabane, too, there are two separate stationmasters, each with his staff of officials. One looks after the Great Northern's interests; the other owes his allegiance to the Midland.

Instances of this kind could be multiplied. British railway companies can quarrel, but though they quarrel they do not always go ahead costed with their war paint. This morning, here in Dublin, I passed by in Westmoreland-street the joint office of two English competing companies. I observed the same scrupulous methods in vogue in Derry, for the L. and N.W., and the L. and T., and in several towns in England. Companies may fight, but ultimately it is the public that bear the blows and pay the war charges. In Belfast there are eight railway shops in Royal Avenue, the most expensive quarter of the city, that is a pure waste of about $\$250,000$ annually. One should do, and it would be less embarrassing to the public than the sight of them.

There are some of the economies suggested by a look through the details of "working expenditures" (p. 211). They do not in any one case represent decreased facilities to the public, but the reverse. For the most part they are uneconomical under the present complicated and extravagant regime.

The aggregate of the useless expenditure amounts to a very large sum. We are, therefore, quite prepared to believe with Sir G. Findlay that at least 20 per cent reduction in the working expenses could be effected by united management, "besides other economies," 20 per cent. of the total working expenditure, and this is what this distinguished railway authority apparently meant, would for any year imply a saving of over half a million. "The other economies" have been already indicated. "Observation in Continental Europe, where Government ownership of railways prevails," declares unhesitatingly a quite dispassionate Harvard University Professor, "strongly impresses one with the economic advantages of a uniformly unified system of operation."‡

But there would obviously result from amalgamation many more advantages which cannot be directly expressed in terms of pounds, shillings, and pence. Through tickets, and possibly Belgian tourist fares, more often through carriages, improved connections, and, therefore, time saved, and time for many people is money; through rates from any one town of Ireland to any other; another train for goods and passengers by the mere fact of better connections and the relief from trans-shipment; less handling, and, therefore, less breakage and damages, along with less expense. In Germany, in 1872, at a remarkable Industrial Convention held at Leipzig the memorial of the German Reichstag, which represents the united Chambers of Commerce, was adopted. The memorial prayed for railway reform in the interests of commerce, and of commerce alone. "There are in Germany at one and the same time," they urged, "Empire railways, State railways, private railways under State administration, independent railways, and railways let on lease, with about fifty different administrations and a number of different unions. This diverse system," they concluded, "is the true cause of the constantly increasing inefficiency of our railway system." The German Government at once responded to this petition. We know the results.

At the very infancy of railroading the U.S. recognised the benefits of unified systems. "There was about as much efficiency in operating 'ten made,' as wrote the secretary of the New York Central as far back as 1850," "as there would be in ten men trying to do a thing one man ought to do. Every board of directors had its own profits to make and its own schemes to advance, and there was no obligation on the part of any one company to do anything for any other." The process of consolidation actively then begun has gone on ever since. It has now given each of several companies the control or ownership of

Oct. 31, 1907.

See Joseph
McMahon, a few
representative
towns of the
Lancashire
County
Council.

Memorandum on possible economies by unified working—see

Sir G.
Findlay's
estimate of
savings by
unified
management.

Included savings.

* Goods train (1896). Resultants, 5 per cent. Railway (113) miles, 3.23 a.m. (for 60) equal to 92 miles on hour. If for San's, stops there till 10.45 a.m., i.e., 7 hours.

† That is $\$141.18$ 10s. 8 3/4 p.

‡ See *Public Works*, 1907, Introduction, p. 211.

§ Came to Westmoreland, i.e., 64 miles in 32 hours, i.e., at the rate of 12 miles an hour. Small difficulties, which the big companies will go to their great lengths to surmount—by doing so to economize—if they do not patiently try to thwart—where constantly Chinese parties to interfere—has to be left off the consideration at both ends. If the track line between the end of the line is not a thing one man ought to do. Every board of directors had its own profits to make and its own schemes to advance, and there was no obligation on the part of any one company to do anything for any other." The process of consolidation actively then begun has gone on ever since. It has now given each of several companies the control or ownership of

(Public Works, Q. 1252)

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph Sheehan, C.C., representative of the Leitrim County Council.

Memorandum on possible economies in railway workings—cont.

American lines amalgamated in 1900 and 1901, nearly five times the mileage of the Irish lines.

more than 10,000 miles of road. A passenger can without skimping go from the Atlantic seaboard to St. Louis, or even San Francisco. According to the 10th report of the Inter-State Commerce Commission, published in 1905, during the year 1904 railway companies owning 5,600.18 miles of line were "re-organized, merged, and consolidated." For the year 1905 the corresponding item was 10,486.37 miles. The grand total of the mileage of Ireland, broad gauges and narrow gauges, and even the Ballybanlon (main rail) included, is barely 3,212 miles, not one-third the mileage "re-organized, merged, and consolidated" in the United States in 1905. Surely half-a-dozen business men could do the whole work in as many months. What has been done once can be done again. The extent of the work is to be compared rather to the municipalization of the Liverpool or Glasgow Tramways than to the nationalization of the Prussian or Belgian railways. The plain and necessary deduction from all said is, it should be done and done quickly. Ireland, like a second Locomotive, is being crushed to death by its railways and their exorbitant charges. The change is the main thing that have retarded "the expansion of the traffic upon the Irish lines and their full utilization for the development of the agricultural and industrial resources of the country."

I do not wish to blame the Irish management, nor to join in with a very high authority on railway matters who witnesses against it. As far as the directors are concerned, the terms of the long quotations in the press* before you, though directed to light railways, apply equally to our ordinary ones. They are left to a number of local people "with no experience whatever of railways." But, indeed, no small railway away from large towns could under present conditions do well in Ireland. Even English management, as good as there is, of a short Irish railway, is a failure as complete as the worst of them. Look at the Dundalk, Newry, and Greenore line of 26 miles. It belongs exclusively to the London and North Western; it occupies about the most favourable position in Ireland. It possesses the advantage of the assistance, under agreement, of the Great Northern (Ireland), and of the enterprise which has fourteen "drawn," permanent officials, all over Ireland. Yet the last published Board of Trade returns show that its expenditure for the year 1895 was 106 per cent. of its gross receipts. In 1899 (the only other year of which I happen to have the records), when, I presume, it had as its manager Sir G. Findlay himself, with his forty years' experience, and all his judiciousness, its gross receipts were £12,621, but its expenditure overtopped that—£13,708. If the Greenore line were standing alone depending on itself, as most of our small railways are, it would long since have been in the hands of a receiver. It would hardly refrain, any more than our little Irish ones, from crushing the public all it could in its fight for existence. Doubtless, as a feeder and part of a pretty gigantic system, it pays. So, I submit, would our little Irish ones.

Amalgamation, so far as it has gone in Ireland, has been successful. The Great Northern, for instance, is the resultant of eleven lines brought together in 1870. Before the amalgamation the greater part of them paid no dividend. About one of the eleven, for example, that from Irvinestown to Ballyshannon, the authority just named spoke at the beginning of his evidence before the Select Commission on Industries (Ireland). The capital, he stated, sunk in these 37 miles was so unproductive "that a very few thousand a year, perhaps £4,000 or 55,000, and not more," was the profit for twenty years. About another of them, the Irish North-Western, running from Dundalk to Enniskillen and Londonderry he had "little hesitation in saying that had it not been absorbed the then owning company would have been unable to have kept it open. It must have been shut up; it was hardly safe at one time to run over." (Commission on Industries, Q 10816.) Now, the unified Great Northern is the most commercially successful of our Irish railways. Its Ordinary Stock pays 6½ per cent. Yesterday it sold at 142. "If you could amalgamate all the railways of Ireland," stated an experienced an authority as ever lived

(Grieson), "and put them in a fair financial position . . . I consider it would be a very great advantage to Ireland" (Public Works, Q. 35592).

A trunk system inevitably opposes tooth and nail the promoting of an independent line foreseen to present the remotest danger of disturbing its traffic monopoly. Once made, it is said to deliberately throw every obstacle it can in the way of its successful working. This is done, not out of "pure enmity" of course, nor out of the spirit of bullying, but with a well-calculated design, even where there is no competition, on ultimate appropriation and its own betterment. Both do ultimately exist, but it is generally the action of the lamb with the wolf. Should the bigger line be now swallowed up in one great system, without any parleying about their rights, it would be a Nemesis, and all of them richly deserve it. Confessedly, however, it must be noted, they believe that consolidation, after which they so strain, is an advantage, and they are the best judges in the matter.

As a sample of forced amalgamation—Take the little line of ten miles from Killybeg Junction to Ballyshannon, the outcome of local efforts. It was, I have been informed, from its opening threatened by changing time tables and heavy rates. Finally it had to bow to the inevitable—it is now a portion of the Midland Great Western. The same big corporation has been most unaccommodating to the Carran and Leitrim. It is constantly at war with the Sligo and Leitrim, the public coming in for all the blows that pass between them. Some years ago the Drogheda Railway, about eight miles, was bought by the millennium Belfast and Northern Counties for £3,000, and in 1895 the 2½ miles constituting the Carran and Banagher Line was gobbled up by the Great Southern and Western. The purchase price was £5,000. This sum would not have constructed the odd half mile.

Consolidation and consequent improvement have taken place wholesale in Scotland and England, too. The Great Western originally consisted of 114 companies. The big railways, such as the Great Eastern, the North Eastern, the London and North Western, have been regular cannibals in eating up the smaller ones. Many of the little lines when independent were most unsatisfactory. As a specimen, take the Chester and Holyhead branch of the London and North Western, which most of us have passed over. In 1882 the big railway got it at a discount of 50 per cent. on the invested capital. The price is an index to its prosperity and prospects at the time. This is now the best paying portion of a well-paying system. Over it the traffic increased so enormously that in 1888 four tons of rails had to be laid down from Chester to Rhyl in an effort to cope with it. Prosperity rather induces competition than competition prosperity, and so this year we have seen the Great Western Railway completing its preparations to relieve it of some of that traffic. Experiment is the best test. The experience of England, America, half-a-dozen countries of Europe, and of Ireland itself, must go for ought or else one can say with moral certainty that amalgamation is a step in the right direction. The bigger the amalgamation the greater the boon. In the words of a member of the present Commission, "The larger the undertaking the more economically will it be managed, provided you have the proper people at the head of it." Thus, on the face of it, is quite evident.

"Germany," sums up an able English writer in the "Contemporary Review" (Dec., '04, p. 797), at the end of a long article proving it, "protects and fosters her industries, not only by her tariff, but also by a practical education, by equitable and cheap laws, and before all by the provision of adequate, efficient, and cheap means of transport." Ireland has none of these things. They are not considered at present in our England, and the British Parliament thinks only for and about England. About Ireland it merely does talking. She needs all of them, but especially the last, "cheap means of transportation." Another quotation establishes this—"No student of history can fail to be struck with the uniformly dreary and depressing character of the record that sets forth Ireland's true place in the economy of nations. Her

Cost of working the Dundalk, Newry, and Greenore Railway (L. and N. W. Company)

Amalgamation as carried out on the Great Northern of Ireland.

* Quoted in questions Nos. 20851-2 ante.

people are steeped in the deepest poverty. Her industry has been hampered, demoralised, and blighted in a thousand different ways, until it is but the ghost of what it ought to be; and thus, too, in spite of her possession of considerable natural resources and labour that is both capable and cheap. Of commerce, except in agricultural products, she has next to none, notwithstanding that she has a fleet, larger, and better equipped seaboard than almost any other European nation." This is not an extract from an Irish agitator's speech, but from a most carefully composed standard book, "Railway Problems," written by perhaps the greatest English authority on statistics of the last century, and author of the work, "England's Supremacy."—Jones. He concludes the paragraph by saying—"It almost follows, as a necessary corollary, that her railway resources are behind those of Great Britain, alike in their extent and their suitability to the requirements of her people."

I may be allowed to confirm the conclusion of this high authority by a sentence from a speech indeed, but not, again, of an Irish agitator, but of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, delivered in the House of Commons on August 23rd, 1886.—"At one time it was my fate to travel a good deal in Ireland, and I will appeal to every member who represents an Irish constituency, or who has lived in Ireland, whether he knows anything much worse in any part of the world than the facilities, if they may be so called, for the interchange of traffic afforded by the different companies and the rates charged for the conveyance of passengers." This Government—a Conservative one, I believe, but it does not matter, they are all the same—appointed Commissions to inquire into this matter, and everything else that was bothering them. After describing the stamp of Commissions that would have the matter in hands, he concluded by saying, "I hope I have said something to show the House that what we mean by these Commissions is not the delay suggested for us but real business. We want to do something in a matter that urgently requires to be dealt with—the Irish question. We want to put an end if we can to this interminable series of reports, coupled with inaction as to these matters, so infinitely connected with the social and commercial condition of Ireland." This was twenty years ago. Fully half a score Commissions had inquired and inquired into the Irish railway question before that, but nothing was done. In 1836, before a line except the little Kingstown one had been laid down, the first of these Royal Commissions, the Drummond Commission, sat, its terms of reference were to consider a general system of railways for Ireland with a view to directing the growth of this new means of intercourse, developing the resources of the country, and obtaining the greatest advantage at the smallest outlay. It concerned itself of the danger to the Irish public of the creation of vast monopolies, formulated a scheme, and argued that a line from Dublin to Cork, with a branch line to Limerick, should be executed as public works. Their findings and report commended themselves to the House of Commons. The results ended with the House of Commons resolution approving of them. Though the Commission had pointed out that the circumstances of Ireland were wholly different from those of England, yet private companies were allowed to proceed freely as in England and Scotland. Their elaborate survey and report proved so much waste paper Lord Melbourne's Government had something else to do besides bothering itself about the concerns of Ireland, vital though they might be. If the English system, like some of the English laws, did not suit us, then so much the worse for us. So the English system, piecemeal and unimpaired as it is, we have. In the face of the Drummond Commission Report, with us it is incommensurate.

An important Railway Commission sat in 1867 and 1868, but its reports, like all the others, are in the lumber room of Railway Blue Books. In 1901 (30th April) and ever so many times since and before in Parliament many resolutions urging State purchase and reduction of fares were proposed, and, perhaps, passed in Parliament. Whether passed or not again matters little, for resolutions are as cheap as petitions or Royal Commission reports. In 1871 and 1873 the Irish representatives in a body petitioned for the State purchase of Irish railways, coupled with a large reduction of rates. The memorial was signed by 78 Irish peers and 60 members

of Parliament, and they undertook to guarantee that any resulting loss should be borne by Ireland alone (Hansard III., col. 1768). The Government of the day, I am sure, expressed sympathy, and promised consideration, and then—turned its attention from this little parochial affair to something of Imperial interest that was really important in its eyes. Even if Imperial chambers, if they thought twice, it might appear worth the cost of a couple of big battleships to try, seriously, as other Governments do, to befriended its subjects and make Ireland worth living in.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's Commission of great expectations, that on Irish Public Works, 1886, was as inequitable and thorough as the rest of them. It ended in smoke. It laid upon the backs of another Commission which sat in the House of Commons the very year before (1885), and whose labours occupy an enormous volume of 1,000 pages. All its trouble, too, went for nothing. Should this Commission's labours prove equally barren of results, then, I fear, such bodies will begin to be regarded as partaking of something of the nature of a herring; but a herring that can hardly ever again be seriously repeated.

(End of Mens. on Possible Economies.)

25652 Mr. Serres.—It is suggested that because some of these prohibitive and oppressive Acts against Ireland were old they need not be mentioned now; but if they accomplished the purpose of keeping Ireland down, and if Ireland has never since been able to rise, are they not quite relevant to the present discussion? That is my opinion, and, furthermore, Ireland is down owing to them.

25653 If prohibitive and oppressive Acts as accomplished their purpose long ago, there is no necessity to pass any more of them—I should expect not. Rather the other way round—that the English people, in their generosity, would now be prepared to make some amends for them.

25654 There has been a good deal of criticism of State-owned and managed lines. Does your study of the subject convince you of this, at any rate, that where the railway lines are the property of a country where the general effect has been to secure substantial reductions of rates and fares, and, at the same time, a substantial development of the bulk of travel and traffic? Yes, that is the case in every country in Europe. It is very remarkable that the railways in Germany have developed side by side with a most wonderful development of the canals. Here was a Government helping on the canals to compete with their own railways, and, notwithstanding that, the railways have gone on increasing in value and efficiency. And France is doing the very same thing. The canals are free to every Frenchman without tax or tariff.

25655 Public lines stand upon a different basis from private lines. I put it to you that in private lines the sole test of success is profit, but if public lines are worked for the benefit of the country, profit is not the sole test, because profits are applied for the benefit of the public, to reduce rates and develop trade.—Yes, what they lose out of one pocket they get in another. In Denmark if the railways returned more than two per cent you would have all the people up in arms to reduce the rates.

25656 The true comparison I suggest would be, on the side of the private lines, the actual profit, and on the side of the publicly owned and managed lines the actual surplus in addition to the amount of profits from time to time devoted to the reduction of rates and fares.—Yes.

25657 Some mention has been made about political influence in a publicly-owned system—as that a Member of Parliament might press for benefit for a district—would you say the management of Irish railways was now in reality free from political and sectional influences? I think the case has been established beyond you or may that they are not. In the railways I know most about a Nationalist has no chance whatever of any respectable position, he may be but the bearer of wood or the drawer of water, but if you look out for one of them as a stationmaster or inspector, or even as a guard, you will be a long time looking.

25658 Influence is exercised, but it is not responsible to public opinion.—That is so.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph MacMahon, C.M., representative of the Limerick County Council.

Memorandum on possible economies by washed working—cont.

Reduced fares and rates and development of traffic result from State ownership of railways.

The application of surplus profits to the reduction of rates and development of trade.

The subject of political influence as applied to railway management.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Rev. Joseph
Nichols, p.p.,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

An Irish body
likely to
work the
railways on
purely
business
principles.

25959. Would not responsibility to public opinion be a great advantage?—Decidedly.

25960. And if a Member of Parliament tried to use undue influence for the benefit of a particular district, would not the specific gravity of public opinion defeat that?—Certainly, I would have implicit confidence in a body of Irishmen doing what was right all round.

25961. Irishmen, acting in the light of public opinion, managing a great business undertaking which would be subject to business tests, would manage it on business principles?—Yes.

25962. We have heard of dissatisfaction in Germany, where they have publicly-owned railways. Are the rates and fares lower in Germany than in these countries?—Immensely lower.

25963. Mr. devereux.—Do you know what they are in this country—if you do you are the only man that does?—I think we have already quoted the fares.

25964. But the average fares?—In Germany.

25965. We know what it is in Germany. Do you know what it is in this country?—It is in the railway returns.

25966. No; that is the average ordinary fares. If you bring people by excursion trains at a farthing a mile it will make the average different?—I acknowledge the railway returns are not as full and satisfactory as the public would wish. There are a good many things left out.

25967. Mr. Sexton.—Your examination of the subject has persuaded you that the rates and fares are much lower in Germany?—Yes. There is nobody who has spent any time studying the subject who would not come to that conclusion.

25968. If, therefore, the German is dissatisfied, it may be because the German is an idealist?—Possibly.

25969. He has more reason for satisfaction than we have?—Yes.

25970. Have you seen a speech of the President of the Board of Trade in which he said there was a painful contrast between the satisfaction expressed amongst the traders in Germany and the profound dissatisfaction which prevails in England?—I have not come across that speech.

25971. Do you think the passenger fares are much too high for this country?—Much too high.

25972. Especially the second class?—Yes.

25973. Would you suggest a halfpenny a mile for third class, one penny for second class, and three-halfpence for first class would be more likely to suit the income of this country and would be certain to earn a large profit?—Yes. According to economists the average income of a family in Ireland is only £15; the least living income is £12. There is, then, only £3 over to pay for any expense, such as going by train and so on, and expense to a man with such a small margin is a very much larger consideration than to a man who has £30 or £50 over and above what enables him to live.

25974. You say that the Irish legal maximum rates are higher than the English maximum rates?—Yes. In Ireland, if a person complains about the rates, he is told: "We are entitled to charge them."

25975. The Irish legal maximum rates are higher than the English maximum rates?—Yes.

25976. And the Irish actual rates are very near the maximum?—Yes.

25977. And the actual Irish rates are very much higher than the English actual rates?—Yes.

25978. Do you say, so far as your examination has gone, that the rates include charges for station and service terminals where no service is rendered?—Yes. I say the service terminal is charged when that service is not rendered.

25979. What about collection and delivery?—Except on the Great Northern, I think there is no such thing as collection and delivery in Ireland.

25980. But is the charge for collection and delivery included in rates where the company does not collect or deliver?—I am really not aware that it is.

25981. Your observations do not apply to that—only to loading and unloading and station terminals?—Yes.

25982. We have had some questions about the relations between England and Ireland in this matter.

The complaint we make, as I understand, of the high export rates, which limit our output of the agricultural products of this country, is not so much of their absolute amount as of their amount in comparison with the rates which enable producers on the Continent and abroad to flood the English market and keep out the Irish product?—That is the path of our complaint, because it does not matter so much to traders what they do pay, provided their competitors are paying the same thing.

25983. It is not so much the absolute amount of any rate as the amount of the rate with which it compares?—That is so. Besides you have those other countries availed by their Governments in the protection of those articles, and in organising the industries and export traffic.

25984. You have the railways pursuing a commercial policy, they extend—and it is not so surprising—facilities to traffic coming at regular times and in larger quantities from those foreign countries where the traffic is organised by the Government?—Yes. At the same time the general answer that the low import rates to England are due to the fact that they come in large quantities does not hold good.

25985. You need not go into that, because we know that when the traffic does usually consist of large consignments sent at regular times, small consignments at irregular times get the benefit of the low rates derived from the general system. When you are asked is it likely that England will consent to lower export rates from Ireland, in order that Ireland may be able to injure the English farmer, is it not rather this, that we argue that Ireland should be rescued from the disadvantage under which she lies with respect to the foreigner?—That, I think, is the better way of putting it.

25986. That Ireland should be placed on a better footing with regard to those foreign countries, which, by reason of organisation and economies by their Governments, have an advantage in the English market?—Exactly.

25987. Not that any Englishman should be injured; but that Ireland, by getting on an equal footing, should be allowed, having regard to its proximity to England, to be placed in a better position with regard to the foreigner than at present?—Yes; we are paying taxes to the English Government, and England should assist us to some extent. The old economists used to say that a man living near a market had an insalubrious advantage; but at the present time, owing to the modern methods of transport, he has not that advantage at all. A man in Canada or Siberia has the same advantage as a man living in Ireland.

25988. How would the English farmer be injured if, instead of a certain quantity of Danish produce being sent to England, there was an equal quantity of Irish produce in his market?—He would not be injured at all. There are as many eggs coming from Russia to England as from Ireland.

25989. We, therefore, do not want to damage the English farmer?—No. We want to be allowed to live, without being crushed out by the foreigner.

25990. You would say that Englishmen ought to concern themselves to give quality and fair play to this community, which pays about double its share to the British Treasury, rather than make their markets favorable to the foreigner?—That would seem to be reasonable.

25991. On the other hand, as to the effect of the low import rates from England, coupled with the high Irish inland rates, I do not understand you to ask that the import rates should be made higher from England?—No.

25992. What you ask is that the inland rates should be placed on the same footing with them?—Yes, so that the woollen manufacture in Cork should be able to send his goods, say to Cavan, quite as cheaply as a man in Manchester would.

25993. You hold that, along with the advantage that the Englishman has, of great factories and a large output, that this specially arranged low system of fares does exclude the Irish manufacturer from Irish markets?—Yes. Furthermore, I believe that the English manufacturer is assisted by secret rebates. I believe there are a great many secret rebates.

25994. Chairman.—In England?—Yes.

The lowering
of passenger
train fares
recommended.

The rates
charged for
goods in
Ireland
alleged to be
exorbitant.

26993. I think you are wrong in that!—My reason for holding it is this—

26994. Never mind, you do not know it yourself!—I was only going to give you the grounds of my belief.

26995. Mr. Sexton.—The public matter is sufficient here without any speculation as to rebates. The existing public system of low import rates into Ireland does operate as a measure of protection to the importer as against the Irish producer!—Yes; that is so.

26996. That is sufficient!—Yes.

26997. You ask for no protection for Ireland!—No.

26998. You ask for equality!—Yes.

26999. Was not a right to completion of that? Now, do you say that a system of railways broken up into various proprietaries and worked for private gain is the essential and is suitable to the conditions of this country?—No; it is decidedly a system not suited at all to the conditions of the country. Of course, that is not only my own opinion, but, before Irish railways were started at all, you had the Commission, usually called the Drummond Commission, the terms of reference of which were to see how to utilize these new means of transit so as to reap the largest amount of good from the smallest amount of expenditure; and it came particularly to the conclusion that the English system did not suit Ireland. But that Commission, like a great many other Commissions, was a dead letter.

27000. The English system, or any commercial system that looks simply to the making of profit, and increasing that profit without regard to public circumstances is the least suited of all to an undeveloped country!—Yes; it would not have suited England a hundred years ago.

27001. If this country is to be developed, it is by industries dispersed through it!—Yes.

27002. And these industries are particularly those that would be at the mercy of the railway companies?—That is so.

27003. Would you say that what Ireland needs, either to increase her agricultural output or develop manufactures, is a railway system worked as a unit by public authority with public benefit as the essential end, not private profit?—Yes; the public benefit is to be the main end in view. The other question of profit would be a subsidiary matter. That is the railway policy in Holland and Denmark.

27004. And the profits of each year, as they accrued, are to be used as in Australia—not for private gain, but for further facilitating industries!—Yes, and particularly to give railways to backward parts of the country which are very much handicapped by not having these means of conveyance.

27005. And when you have an united system, once you pay the charges and finance, then the surplus remains to be applied wherever it is most needed!—Yes.

27006. And that affords the best prospect for the construction of lines which, however valuable from an economic point of view, would not be likely to be immediately remunerative!—Yes. Of course any new railway to be constructed in Ireland is not likely to be to itself immediately remunerative. And there is no prospect, unless by Government assistance, which we need hardly expect, for the making of any more railways in this country.

27007. And so request an authority as Sir George Finlay recognised that unification was the thing for Ireland?—Yes; he said that the whole of the railways of Ireland could be carried on by one manager and one engineer.

27008. Two days' work at fishing, and four days' play at the railways every week. By purchase by the application of public credit a great saving could be made!—Yes.

27009. You do not consider it indispensable that the Treasury should lend?—I do not think that indispensable.

27010. Apart altogether from the question as to the claim for satisfaction for over-taxation, you do not think it indispensable that they should lend?—No.

27011. You say, let an Irish authority be created

and issue a 3½ per cent. Stock; that stock would float at par, and the transaction so financed would leave a large surplus fund!—Yes.

27012. You have gone into the question very carefully, showing that the resources derivable from unity of working would be even more considerable than those derived from purchase!—Yes.

27013. The two funds could be used experimentally, so as to test the matter without putting the public to loss or risk?—Yes; I would not suggest that things should be rushed at, but that gradual reductions should be made.

27014. About your financial plan—I ignore details at this stage, it will be time when the Act is passed to go into that—but do you separate the railway securities into three classes?—Yes.

27015. You proposed to give to the first-class 3½ per cent. Stock to yield the present income, the second class the same income as at present on 90 per cent. of their capital, and the third class 3½ per cent. on 80 per cent. of their capital?—Yes.

27016. A few questions now about these lines that you are interested in. There are two lines—Argenta to Droonahair and Argenta to Collesbury?—Yes.

27017. They would both be valuable lines!—Yes. I don't think you are to take them as necessarily rival lines at all, because there is room enough for both. From a mineral point of view that is an immensely wealthy country if it were developed.

27018. They should both pay, you would think!—Yes, but the one from Argenta to Droonahair as the longest in the field and would benefit the poorest part of the country. It would give a chance for the development of the entire mineral wealth of that part of the country and therefore should be the first made.

27019. The other would be more an ordinary traffic line!—Yes, going through a wealthy country mainly, but not so thickly populated as the other.

27020. The railway you suggest would develop the mineral resources of the country!—Yes.

27021. Some one suggested that the district is so poor the line would not pay. Of course a district may have poor people, but rich resources!—Yes.

27022. And a line may even pay so as to extinguish the poverty of the people!—Yes. I should say that if the line were once made the Sligo and Leitrim Railway is perfectly prepared to take it up, being satisfied that it would at least pay its working expenses.

27023. Do you know that the mineral resources and especially the ironstone deposits of the Connought mineral area have attracted the attention of the iron and steel trade organs in Germany?—I saw a reference to that but the whole article happened to be a translation into German of an article I supplied to the editor of the "Ironmaster" for his last spring number. Of course in the translation and re-translation there were abundant opportunities for errors creeping in, and they were avoided. It is full of errors.

27024. They are greatly struck with the abundance of mineral resources in that country!—Yes. I am sure Germany is.

27025. They offer comments of a sympathetic character!—Yes.

27026. I understand that the Connought mineral area is sixteen miles square, and we have the best geological and scientific authority for holding that there are vast beds of ironstone and coal in that area!—Yes; that is so. There is Crovella quarter, of 800 acres, where there are 4,800 tons of iron ore to the acre. Professor Hall made a careful survey of the district in 1890.

27027. The State has never made an adequate survey!—No. There came a man from a State Department a few years ago and he did spend a couple of hours there in a downpour of rain, and he thought he knew all about it—after spending about an hour or an hour and a half at it! I was with him all the time. Professor Hall spent a fortnight and Professor Hardman spent another fortnight there.

27028. Have you noticed that it is never a defect of officials in Ireland that they know too little about anything?—That district of 800 acres contains 7,840,000 tons of ironstone. But the whole district must contain millions and millions of tons of the ore.

27029. It has been worked from the 17th century down to a few years ago!—Yes; it was worked in

Oct. 18, 1905.

See Joseph Moohan, C.B., representative of the Leitrim County Council.

The plan recommended for the purchase of existing railway interests.

The necessity for the proposed railway from Argenta to Droonahair.

The mineral resources of the Argenta to Droonahair district.

The wealth in ironstone of the Connought mineral area.

Professor Hall and Hardman's surveys of Crovella district.

The extent of the iron ore deposits in the Leitrim district.

Antiquity of the iron mining industry in Co. Leitrim.

Oct. 11, 1907.
Rev Joseph
Meenan, &c.,
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

The excellent
quality of
the iron pro-
duced in the
Angus and
Downshire
district.

The want of
railway accom-
modation
stands in the
way of the
development
of a pros-
perous
industry.

The necessity
for cheap
export rates
to develop
Irish
industries.

Mr C J
Doyle, &c
representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

Extent of
the railway
accommoda-
tion in Co.
Leitrim.

1855, and the iron sent to Glasgow, where it got a higher price than any produced in the United Kingdom except Cumberland hematite. It would have continued on, but after the Crimean War the price went down and it was not able to stand the heavy freightage.

27032. They had to cart coal eight miles to the railway and then twenty miles to Sligo. No mine could stand that?—No.*

27033. The iron has been used for many years past and it yields 35 per cent of pure metal and excellent iron?—Yes. Particularly it possesses the property of ductility in a higher degree than almost any known iron.

27034. And there is a company quite ready to work the mine if they had the railway, I believe?—Yes, two or three years ago, when we wanted to get this railway, we went on deputations to the Chief Secretary after Chief Secretary, but it was all without result. At that time there was a company ready to take it up, headed by a gentleman who is the chief owner of the latest patent for the conversion of iron ore into steel by electricity. It is worked by the Krupp firm in Germany at the present time.

27035. Superheating the Bessemer process?—Yes. The O'Brien Government sent a Commission to Europe to examine into the different electro-thermic methods of smelting iron ore and making different classes of steel. That was three or four years ago—I happen to have their report—and this process superheats all the processes then given extant.

27036. A line giving an opening to the port of Sligo and to the markets of the world would cost about £200,000?—Roughly, that.

27037. And that £200,000 is what stands between this poor district, so rich in mineral resources and neglected by the Government, and the chance of commercial activity?—Yes.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

27038. I have listened with great interest to your evidence, which I think is extremely valuable. I think after the various examinations I need only ask one question, and I do so simply to make clear one of your answers to Colonel Fox, which may not be quite clear on the minutes. I take it your view is that you want to assist the people of Ireland by having cheap export rates exactly as they have in Germany, so that you can send goods to England or any other place?—Yes.

27039. That is probably what you want?—Yes.

27040. And the cheap export rate which is given by the State in Germany allows the traders in Germany to send to foreign countries the goods inland?—Yes.

27041. That is one of the things you want?—Yes.

27042. That is the great advantage of the State railway system?—Yes.

27043. You think that if that system were adopted

and the Irish railways were under the management of the Irish people themselves it would work for the benefit of the Irish people and not for the interests of a few?—That is precisely my view.

27044. And you think that once we have that adopted, with the cheap labour in Ireland, cheap railways—that is to say, railways made cheaply, with feeders constructed for the main lines where required, we would be in a better position than Denmark or Canada to supply the English and other markets at a cheap rate?—I should expect so. I would like to quote an opinion which, I think, is very valuable.

Mr. Sexton.—We think your own opinion as good as any.

27045. Lord Pierce.—I think your own opinion on that point is clear and distinct, and my own experience of these German cheap export rates is that they are so advantageous to the German manufacturer that I agree with you it would be desirable to apply them to Ireland.

27046. Mr. Telford.—I have ascertained as to the rate for cement between Sligo and Ballydoon, and for which Father Meenan stated the charge was 5s. 9d. a ton. I have found from my office that the charge is only 1s. 6d. per ton for cement, and for 6-ton loads it is 1s. 3d. per ton. There must be an error as to that particular consignment, an error of weight or something. But the fact is, it is 1s. 6d. a ton.

Witness.—Here is the actual receipted bill for 5s. 9d. A member of the Commission asked why do not the people ask about these things. In the first place the leaders have not a very distinct idea of what the rate—the maximum rate—should be. And, secondly, sometimes when he applies to the railway companies they give no further information.

27047. Chairman.—You produce the bill which shows on the face of it that the consignee was charged 5s. 9d. for a ton of cement, which is an outrageous rate?—It was higher than carting.

27048. And now the manager of the railway has been good enough to look at it and he finds that the rate is 1s. 6d., which is a very reasonable rate, and 1s. 3d. for 6-ton loads. Evidently there is a mistake somewhere?—It is not my mistake.

Mr. Telford.—Might I ask for that document.

Witness (handing document).—I hope he will be able to explain some of the other rates that I put before you.

Mr. Awerth (to Mr. Telford).—You say the rate is 1s. 6d. per ton and 1s. 3d. per ton for six-ton loads?

Mr. Telford.—Is 3d. is "C" class rate, subject to no minimum.

Mr. Awerth.—You don't raise the rate for two-ton lots?

Mr. Telford.—No; we are more liberal than that. We don't have a minimum for two-ton lots.

Witness.—The minimum they always quote in Ireland is six tons.

Mr. Telford.—That's a wagon load.

Mr. C. J. DOYLE, M.P., EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

27049. You are a Member of Parliament?—Yes.

27050. You also appear on behalf of the Leitrim County Council?—Yes. I was appointed by the Leitrim County Council to give evidence.

27051. You and the County Council are of opinion that Leitrim is very badly supplied with railway accommodation?—Yes.

27052. How many miles of broad-gauged railways are in that county?—I should say, roughly, about forty miles of broad-gauged railways running across Leitrim and connecting with Sligo and Enniskillen, then there is a little bit of broad-gauged railway in South Leitrim on the Midland line.

27053. Then there are narrow-gauged railways as well?—The Cavan and Leitrim. That is the whole of the railway accommodation.

27054. You are of opinion that the existing railway accommodation is not adequate for the proper development of the resources of that county?—Very inadequate.

27055. Are the principal resources in the county mineral or agricultural?—As Father Meenan has pointed out, there are very rich mineral resources in the County of Leitrim, especially in the Crocwalsh and Arigna districts; also in Drunkenna, from the collieries, in the centre of the county; but there is no railway near Drunkenna at all.

27056. Have you heard the evidence of the two previous witnesses?—Yes.

27057. Do you agree generally with their evidence as to existing railway accommodation?—Yes. I agree with them generally.

* See article on *The Connemara Mineral Area in New Ireland Review*, May, 1907.

27068 Do you agree with the plan for an extension, submitted by the last witness?

27069 Mr. Sexton.—Argues to Drogheda.—

Witness.—Yes. I acted with Father Mehan and a local committee in supporting and forwarding a scheme for railway extension from Arigna to Drogheda.

27070 Chairman.—Unless you wish it, I don't ask any questions about rates.

Witness.—I might point out how my own town—Manorhamilton—is situated. It is midway between Sligo and Enniskillen, on the Sligo line, and there are through rates given to both Sligo and Enniskillen for goods.

27071 Name the goods?—I have got some particulars here. There is a through rate for bacon from Liverpool to Enniskillen via Manorhamilton of 12s. 6d. The rate from Liverpool to Manorhamilton is 16s. 7d., although Manorhamilton is twenty-five miles from Enniskillen. The consequence of that is that Manorhamilton is not able to compete with neighbouring market towns, such as Enniskillen and Sligo, and we have no remedy, owing to the fact that the railway company has a monopoly.

27072 The rate from Liverpool to Enniskillen is 12s. 5d.—Yes.

27073 And the traffic passes through the place where you live?—Yes. It goes to the port of Sligo.

27074 But if you want it to your own town you have to pay 16s. 7d.—Yes.

27075 I suppose you know the reason of that?—I consider that the reason is that there is inadequate railway accommodation in that district, and the Lestrin Railway Company, having a monopoly, treat as in Manorhamilton as they like.

27076 Is there not a direct sea route between Liverpool and Sligo?—Yes.

27077 Is that not a reason?—Goods can come from Sligo to Manorhamilton as cheaply, I think, as from Liverpool.

27078 What is the rate from Sligo to Manorhamilton?—I am not quite precise as to the rate, but I should think 3s. or 4s. per ton, roughly. I know that it is more costly to bring goods to Manorhamilton than to bring them past Manorhamilton to Enniskillen.

27079 Lord Pirrie.—You mean that they can be delivered at Sligo as cheaply as at Manorhamilton, which is only half-way?—Yes.

27080 Mr. Sexton.—What you say is that you have to send them past your town, and book them back again, and that you suffer a good deal by it?—That is the point.

27081 The double freight is less than the single freight to your own town?

Witness.—The railway company give through rates to Enniskillen and Sligo, and only one through rate to Manorhamilton, and that is for bacon, of which very little is imported. They give a single through rate between Manorhamilton and Liverpool.

27082 Chairman.—Has any application been made to the railway companies about it?—I don't think the question has been agitated.

27083 I mean by the County Council?—No; I think not. The County Council has never taken it up. I have been inferred of these facts by traders in the town of Manorhamilton.

27084 What do you think is the remedy for this sort of thing?—Well, I have recently seen a scheme put forward by the Foughda Development Association to run a line from Drogheda, on the east coast, to Mullaghmore, on the west, passing through Manorhamilton. Such railway would give competition.

27085 On the question of railway management, what are your views?—On the general question, I am entirely in favour of amalgamation and nationalisation, under purely Irish control.

27086 You have heard the evidence of the previous witness?—Yes.

27087 Do you agree with it?—I thoroughly agree with it.

27088 You are opposed to State purchase?—I am

entirely opposed to State purchase. I would oppose it by every means in my power.

27089 You think the thing can be done in this country?—I not only think it can be done, but that it ought to be done, and that it would be the only solution we can expect; for if the railways passed to the control of the Treasury, our last state might be worse than our first.

27090 How would you raise the money?—A large number of retiring shareholders would, probably, take railway stock from the County Councils, or whatever body would own the railways. I am sure they would take such stock at 3½ per cent.

27091 Who is to guarantee it?—If the County Councils owned the railways they could give the guarantee.

27092 Do you mean the collective guarantee of all the County Councils?—Yes.

27093 Do you think you would get all the County Councils to agree to that?—I think so.

27094 Do you think that that would be as good a security as if the guarantee were by the British Government?—I think it would be quite a sufficient guarantee.

27095 Sufficient probably, but not as good?—Considered merely as a security it would not be as good. But we are not considering the value of the security, but the sufficiency of the railway accommodation.

27096 Two or three schemes have been suggested for taking over these railways—one is that the State should purchase, and guarantee the capital. Does that commend itself to your approval?—I would prefer a scheme by which the County Councils would guarantee the capital.

27097 And that whatever loss there should be the County Councils should make it up?—Yes. If there should be any loss.

27098 What about the profits?—I think there would be a considerable profit by amalgamation and the various economies that would be effected. I would say that the profits should go largely to reducing the rates for goods and passengers.

27099 It would not become the property of those guaranteeing people?—Yes, it would; at the railways because their property.

27100 Do you say that the County Councils would bear any loss in taking over these railways?—I would not put it in that way. I say that they should guarantee payment of interest, and bear any loss that there should be.

27101 What would you do if there was a profit?—Is your idea that it should be appropriated for the reduction of rates and fares?—Yes.

27102 You think that would be a satisfactory solution of the question?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

27103 You say that the rate for grocery goods and bacon from Liverpool to Enniskillen past your town—Manorhamilton—is 12s. per ton?—Yes.

27104 Whereas the rate for mixed groceries in barrels from Liverpool via Dundalk and Enniskillen is 30s. per ton?—Yes.

27105 And from Enniskillen to Manorhamilton about 4s. per ton?—Yes.

27106 If, instead of getting the goods to your town at 30s. a ton, they are brought first to Enniskillen at 12s. a ton, and then back to Manorhamilton at 4s. per ton, do you not save by that 14s. a ton?—Yes. I am so informed by a trader in Manorhamilton.

27107 It costs 30s. to have the goods brought direct to your own town but if they are sent past that town to Enniskillen and booked back again, the whole thing costs only 15s., instead of 30s.?—Yes. Quite so.

27108 It may be contended that the rates to Sligo and Enniskillen are dictated by competition—that is, that the railways in this particular case are put to the option of carrying at those rates or not having the traffic at all?—Yes.

27109 But you would say that even admitting that competition dictates three rates, the disparity between them and the rates to Manorhamilton is too great?—Much too great.

Oct. 15, 1903.
Mr. C. J. Dalton, M.P.,
Representative of the
Lestrin
County
Council.

The purchase
of the Irish
railways by
the County
Councils
suggested.

Proposed
application
of profits
from the
working of
the railways
to reduction
of rates and
fares.

Comparison
as to the
disparity
between the
rates for
bacon, &c.,
Liverpool and
Manorhamilton,
and those to
Enniskillen
and Sligo.

Oct 11, 1907.
Mr. G. J.
Deane, M.P.,
Representative
of the
Leitrim
County
Council.

The Irish
purchase
clause in the
Railway Act
of 1894.

Estimate of
annual saving
by amalgama-
tion of the
Irish
railways.

Proposed
reduction of
a fund out of
savings for
reductions in
rates.

The security
of the Irish
railways and
the rates of
the country
concerned
ample for the
purchase
price of the
railways.

27100 And what you point out is, that though, under a united system of railways the same competition might dictate the same rate to Sligo and Enniskillen—the governing body of that system would lighten the burden on the people of Manchester!—I thank so.

27101. They would have no inducement to regard any particular town with special favour, but would act impartially to all!—Yes.

27102. Have you read the Act of 1894?—Yes.

27103. Do you remember the clause relating to twenty-five years' purchase?—Yes; I remember that clause.

27104. If my memory is right—for it is some time since I looked at the Act—the provision for 25 years' purchase only applies to railways that pay a dividend of over 10 per cent.—I don't remember that.

27105. Railways that were already in existence are excluded from the operation of the Act—the clause only applies to railways coming into existence afterwards; and there is an alternative provision that if they paid less than 10 per cent. the machinery for purchase was to be arbitration?—Yes.

27106. Do you consider from your knowledge of the case that an arbitrator, sitting to-morrow to decide on the value of the Irish railways, with instructions to have regard to the prospects of each line, would be likely to increase the present value of the Irish railways?—No—probably the contrary.

27107. You think that by amalgamation a million a year would be saved?—Yes, I should think about a million a year.

27108. I suppose you know that the present percentage of the working expenses of railways in Ireland is 61 per cent. of the receipts?—Yes.

27109. One per cent. less than in England, and seven per cent. more than in Scotland?—Yes.

27110. In order to save a million a year you would have to reduce the working expenses, which are now two and a half millions, to one and a half millions, and that would be only 37 per cent. of the receipts?—Even if the saving was not quite up to the million there must be a considerable saving. From a calculation which I made I believe it would be possible to reduce the passenger and live stock rates by 20 per cent., and still have a saving of £262,000.

27111. Ten per cent. of a reduction on working expenses would be a great reduction?—Yes.

27112. Supposing the present expenses were reduced by 10 per cent., that would be a saving of a quarter of a million?—Yes.

27113. If you add that to any saving effected by purchase you would have a fund quite sufficient to start experimentally a policy of reduction of rates in order to ascertain whether it would be likely to develop trade?—Yes.

27114. And you could be guided by the results?—I don't see that there could be any risk.

27115. I suppose you would be quite willing to borrow from the Treasury if they were willing to lend?—I would be quite willing to borrow from anybody.

27116. Every quarter per cent. would mean over £100,000, and if the Treasury could lend at 3 per cent. on an Irish security that would be a difference of about £300,000 a year?—It would.

27117. You would take it either by way of retribution or as a loan?—More probably it would come as a loan.

27118. That is your view of the British temperament. If the Treasury were unwilling to lend either the General Council of the County Councils, or, if not, another body equally representative of the public could give the necessary security?—Yes.

27119. The security of the railways and the security of the rates?—Yes.

27120. You were asked what would happen if some of the County Councils did not assent to this; but if it were carried out by law there would be no power in any particular County Council to prevent it.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

27121. You want more railways in North Leitrim?—Yes.

27122. Do you think that North Leitrim ought to take any share of the risk?—Any share in the nationalisation?

27123. No, supposing that you wanted half a million for your railways ought you to be responsible for any part of the interest or should it come out of the general fund?—The Leitrim County Council is very unwilling to take any risk at present.

27124. What is your view about the justice of the matter?—My view of the justice of the matter is that it would be unfair to expect our district to guarantee a new line of railway which would serve as a feeder for other companies and increase their profits.

27125. I don't suggest that Leitrim should be asked to pay the whole. Are we to be told that the Leitrim County Council wants more railways, but says that it won't pay anything—ought they to expect all and not pay anything?—I don't suppose that they can expect to get everything done for them. They must be prepared to do something for themselves. I believe that the Leitrim County Council and the people are prepared to do anything in reason.

27126. We have been rather told that they expect to have the whole thing done for them. You speak of a reduction of a million, and you have not any figures behind it?—No, I merely put that down as a rough estimate.

27127. Are you aware that the Allport Commission, who did condescend to details, held that the reduction would come to £70,000?—By doing away with large boards of directors and the multiplication of clerical work, and that sort of thing, I think the economy would be much more than £70,000.

27128. You know that Switzerland and Italy have nationalised their railways?—Yes.

27129. Do you know that in both countries there has been a startling jump in the cost of working?—Yes. I am aware that there has been in some places an increase in the cost of working, but if there were a corresponding gain for the manufacturers—

27130. I was going to ask you that very question! supposing that instead of a million we were to put the figure "34" for the gain and no reduction in the cost of working, would you be still in favour of nationalisation of the railways?—Yes—I would be under any circumstances in favour of nationalisation.

27131. You have suggested that the profits, if any, ought to go to the reduction of rates; and you have had in your mind the different policies that different countries have to pursue—you have heard it in this room?—Yes.

27132. Prussia gives a large amount of the profits to the service of the Government?—Yes.

27133. In Switzerland the surplus, if any, is directly devoted to rate reductions?—Yes. Well, I think that in Ireland owing to the peculiar way in which her economic development was restricted in the past we would require any surplus to go to the reduction of traffic rates.

27134. You would approve of a regulation like that in Switzerland that any surplus should be earmarked for railway purposes and not be available for general Government purposes?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HERRINGSON FOX.

27135. Assuming that the shareholders were not prepared to accept the security of the General Council of the County Councils what security would you propose in such a case?—I would propose to issue stock.

27136. In order to do that you should find capital to pay off such shareholders as would not be satisfied to re-invest in the new security?—Yes.

27137. And do you think that you could carry out such a financial transaction in this country alone, without the help of England?—Well, I believe there

are a good many wealthy men in Ireland who at present invest in Government and Foreign securities simply owing to the lack of good Irish investments, and I think that this would provide a very good investment at home in Ireland for Irishmen who had money to invest.

27128. In the event of your not finding people willing to find money in this country for such a transaction would you be prepared in such a case to go to the State and ask them to take over the system and finance it and work it—perhaps not under the system that you suggest, but under some system?—No, I would prefer the existing system to having them put under Imperial administration. I would be willing to accept Imperial finance on commercial terms.

27129. A good many shareholders would not be prepared to accept the control of an Irish authority under existing circumstances. The only other question I have to ask you is as to the saving you speak of. You have, no doubt, read the reports of the half-yearly meetings of the Irish railway companies and the speeches made by the chairmen to the shareholders, and in all cases the story has been almost the same—that they were happy to announce that this half-year there had been an increase in the receipts, but a corresponding increase in the working expenses, the chairman pointing out that the outlook as regarded working expenditure was not hopeful, having regard to the increased cost of coal, labour, and every material that the railways employed, so that they did not see any prospect of a reduction in working expenses—you have, no doubt, seen that?—Yes, but I look forward to a saving from economy effected by unification.

Mr. HUGH BAILEY examined by the CHAIRMAN.

27131. You are a member of the Ballymena District Council?—I am.

27132. And you have been requested by that Council to come before us?—Yes.

27133. You wish to speak merely as to the railway accommodation in your district?—Yes; very much. I might add that when I was nominated three others were nominated with me, and different sections were left to them to deal with. I will confine myself to the business within my own cognisance, but they asked me to add one or two points.

27134. First—Are you satisfied with the facilities now in operation for the shipment of goods across the Channel?—Dissatisfied.

27135. What is your grievance?—One grievance we have is that our goods train leaves too early in the day.

27136. At what time does it leave?—The goods have to be in at a quarter past two and the boats sail at 9 and 10.15 p.m. The distance by rail from Ballymena to Belfast is thirty-three miles. The boats sail at 9 and 10.15, one to Heysham and one to Fleetwood, and the other to Liverpool. The goods must be in the station at 2.15.

27137. And the train leaves at three?—Three o'clock.

27138. What is your suggestion?—Our suggestion is, that the train should start about 5 o'clock from Ballymena, or later if possible, which would give them ample time to get to Belfast.

27139. Is it a single line?—No, a double line from Ballymena.

27140. What are the goods principally?—The goods I speak of are bacon and hams for the English market—that is my department.

27141. I suppose you have represented this to the railway company?—Oh, yes, several times.

27142. What was their answer?—That the train had no many places to call at.

27143. That's what I thought—the intermediate stations?—But we think from the importance of Ballymena, that there should be special trains for us from Ballymena. Our reason is that the competi-

27144. I think you would find that to be a more desirable—I mean from the substitution of one board for the existing ones. They are not extravagant, and the saving would amount to something, but any saving in that direction would not be worth considering.

Witness.—There is just one matter that I wish to bring before the Commission, and that is the proposal of the Drogheda Development Association. I think if a motor service, such as has been recently exhibited in London were established between Drogheda and Mullaghmore it would satisfy the needs of the district. All that would be necessary would be to make the road in some places, and there would not be the cost of constructing a permanent way. From what I have seen of the train that I and some of my colleagues inspected in London I am satisfied that it would meet the needs of the district.

Mr. TAYLOR.—I should be glad to be allowed to clear up a matter in connection with a bill produced by Father Meenan. The place was not Ballymore but Ballaghaderreen, the distance being 32 miles and the rate 5s. 9d. for six-ton lots.

Chairman.—I am glad that that has been cleared up, for it made an impression on my mind that the rate was outrageous.

Lord PIERCE.—Does Father Meenan agree to that?

Rev. Father MEENAN.—Of course I agree to it, but the hieroglyphics may mean either one of the two; and my recollection is that in one of the letters it was Ballymore and not Ballaghaderreen.

Mr. THIGH HANCOCK, Representative of the Ballymena Urban District Council.

There is no keen that if our agents in London or Bradford don't get our orders by one o'clock they can't touch them. We say that the company would increase their traffic by it.

27154. In other words, that the later you could deliver the goods the more it would be for their advantage?—Yes.

27155. Mr. Stenton.—Are there many intervening stations?—A good number. There are a good many to Antrim and other stations. For a long time Ballymena had two railways, one the narrow gauge, but now we are entirely in the hands of a monopoly. Mr. Cowie helps us all he can.

27156. Mr. Akerth.—The railway you speak of went to Larrel?—To Larnac. We would have been satisfied with it but it became the property of the Northern Counties Company and does not compete at all.

27157. Chairman.—With regard to grain you complain that there are different rates for different people?—Yes.

27158. But the circumstances are not the same—are they?—Not all the same. They give special facilities to a trader in Ballymena for quantities of 200 tons. He is charged 5s. a ton on that from Belfast, whilst they charge us 6s. 9d. We say that that is unfair.

27159. We had all this in evidence before, from Derry?—We say they should give us cheaper facilities than Derry. I should say that they give the same trader a station to himself. That is an advantage to that trader, because he can cart his stuff from the station without delay. When we send our carts to the station we have to wait, whereas this other trader has the special station, from which he can cart without any interference. It is a passenger station converted into a special station.

27160. Have you represented that grievance to the railway company?—We have talked about it, and they have answered the question by saying that unless we take 200 tons we cannot get facilities; and we say that they would not give us more to being 200 tons there, and store it until removed.

27161. You never offered them 200 tons?—I did not.

Oct. 11, 1903.

Mr. Hugh
Rafferty,
Representative
of the
Ballymena
Urban Dis-
trict Council.

Complaint as
to excessive
rate for bacon
from Bally-
mena to
English
stations and
Belfast com-
pared with
rate from
Portadown.

Proposed
reduction in
the passenger
fare between
Ballymena
and Belfast.

27162 Two hundred tons does not mean 300 tons carried on the same day?—I don't know what their meaning is.

Mr. Cowie.—One consignment.

27163. Chairman (to Witness).—What is your complaint as to the rate for bacon from Ballymena?—The usual terms were from Belfast to the Midlands of England, 30s. a ton; and then they gave Ballymena a through rate of 38s. 6d.

27164. That was favouring Ballymena?—It was charging half-a-crown additional. We don't complain of that.

27165. What is your complaint now?—That in places like Portadown they deliver that bacon from Portadown through Belfast to the Midlands of England at 84s.

27166. Mr. Acworth.—Do you say from Belfast?—Witness.—I say from Portadown through Belfast. Belfast has the same rate. They charge the same, because they look on Portadown as a competing place. That is to say, it can go by another port—Greenore.

Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—Two companies carrying at the same rate—one from Belfast and one from Portadown.

27167. Chairmen (to witness).—Have you any complaint as to passenger accommodation?—They charge us too much.

27168. What do you mean by "too much"?—The return ticket from Ballymena to Belfast is 4s., and the single fare, 2s. 6d.

27169. What do you suggest?—We think that half-a-crown would be a sufficient return fare. They carry a good many passengers by train from Ballymena at 1s. 7d.

27170. By excursion trains?—Yes.

27171. The ordinary railway fare is not above a penny a mile?—Not from Belfast. 2s. 6d. would be a penny a mile. It is 3d. under it.

27172. And the return fare is not two single fares?—No, it is less—4s.

27173. Then, there are special tickets at special times?—Yes.

27174. What more have you to complain of?—I have not put anything about passenger fares into the abstract. I think the rates are fair, although I think they could be less.

27175. You consider that they are fair?—I consider them fair, but I consider that they could be less. We think that the other rates from Belfast to Ballymena are excessive. I had it from an authority that I can't doubt that twenty years ago an account was kept by an official or officials which found that Ballymena paid 17½ per cent. of the traffic, the trade was so good.

27176. Mr. Acworth.—Was that on the narrow gauge line?—(Witness).—No, on the broad gauge. The officials took the trouble of keeping a separate account for Ballymena.

27177. Mr. Scotson.—Was the Belfast and Ballymena ever an independent railway?—It was.

27178. What did it pay?—I could not tell you; it is so long ago.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

27179. Those rates from Portadown and Belfast of 24s. have been introduced lately?—I should say fully two years ago.

27180. They have made large reductions by those rates?—Yes.

27181. And no reductions in the Ballymena rate?—No.

27182. The competition that was before quite small because very large?—That's so.

27183. Well, I demand the railway company will give reductions?—I want to mention about the fax-wood traffic.

Mr. Cowie.—The rate from Portadown is the same as the rate from Ballymena. There are certain rebates given by the steamship companies.

Witness.—I saw accounts showing that a man paid 24s. a ton for bacon coming to him through Belfast, whilst we pay 32s. 6d., less 2s. rebate to Leeds and Bradford.

27184. Mr. Acworth.—Who claimed the money, was it a claim made by the delivering railway company?—He showed me his rates. I believe it was the London and North-Western Company.

27185. Your complaint about the 300 ton man is that whilst you paid, for anything over five tons, 4s. 9d., there was a drop in his case to 3s. 1—Exactly.

27186. That is your point?—That is my point. There is 1s. 9d. given as a concession, which is unfair to the trade.

27187. Did you complain to the railway company?—I did.

Mr. Cowie.—The rates are 3s. a ton for 300 ton lots; 4s. for 100 ton lots; 4s. 6d. for 25 ton lots; and 4s. 9d. for 5 ton lots.

Witness.—No such rates were ever quoted to me.

27188. Mr. Acworth.—Is that all on the rate-book?

Mr. Cowie.—Yes.

27189. How long have they been on the rate-book?—For a very long time.

Witness.—I sent my head clerk to the station and he had difficulty in getting to know of the 3s. rate.

27190. Mr. Scotson.—Have you ever looked at the rate-book there?—No.

27191. Had your man to ask for it?—He had, and got the rate-book, and saw it with difficulty. No other rates mentioned.

27192. Mr. Acworth.—You haven't gone to the Board of Trade?—We had a Railway Commission in Ballymena at one time, and I acted as the mouth-piece for a number of traders, and we had two firms in Ballymena strong with us, and we did our best to get the rates reduced as low as possible; but when this concession was made there was a complete collapse and I was left high and dry. I was advised if I put the matter into the hands of a solicitor, he could compel a refund of 1s. 9d. With regard to the fax-wood traffic—

27193. Chairmen.—It is a very large traffic?—A very large traffic. It is carried to Coleraine from Rotterdam on a through rate of 26s. a ton. The charge from Rotterdam to Ballymena is 24s. 6d. a ton. They give you a slight rebate, but they say that it is not to be mentioned.

27194. Mr. Scotson.—The distance that is thirty-three miles shorter pays 4s. 6d. more. You at Ballymena pay 4s. 6d. more than they do at Coleraine.

27195. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—I suppose it is from Rotterdam to Bally?

Witness.—No; direct to Coleraine. They bring it all the way to Coleraine at 30s. a ton, and we say that the same company should not charge more to Ballymena when they take it from that to Coleraine, which is thirty-three miles further.

27196. Chairman.—Who makes the sacrifice?

Witness.—I never could find that out. I would guess that both are mixed up in it.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON PECK.

27197. With regard to the bacon traffic, does the steamship company give you back 2s. 1—Yes.

27198. That brings it down to 30s. 1—Yes.

27199. Do they give the same rebate to the people at Portadown?—On the same footing as being the same distance; but now they have a reduction of 5s.

27200. Does that include the rebate?—I think it does. A gentleman showed me his invoice at 24s. a ton.

Increased
competition
of Portadown
with Bally-
mena owing
to favourable
rates to
English
stations.

27201. You have not tried to get the Ballymena rail brought down?—I have, and get no satisfaction.

27202. Has your experience with regard to the taking over of the Northern Railway by the Midland Company of England been that it has been advantageous to you?—I fully expected that, when the Midland Company went into competition with the London and North-Western, we would get some redress and additional facilities, but I am sorry to say that there has not been any change. They have changed us in the same as before.

27203. Would you prefer the former control to that of the Midland Company?—I could not say that. I am always looking for improvement.

27204. I suppose you admit that they have greatly benefited and developed the tourist traffic?—They have, and it requires more development. It is a splendid traffic. I have been asked by one or two Ballymena men to say that there is great difficulty in getting the cattle traffic to Belfast. There are two trains from Ballymena to Belfast—one at 12.30 and the other at 2.15. We must deliver the goods at 2.15. It goes at 3 o'clock. We think there should be a train about 5 o'clock, so as to catch the boats of that night. They should be put up and fed. In place of that they are driven straight to the boat, which I think is wrong.

27205. Has 2.15 been the hour for the last eight or nine years?—It has.

27206. The steamboats up to two years ago sailed at 6 o'clock; when they put the hour farther back did you urge that as an argument in favour of getting the trains you want?—Yes.

27207. In the old days they made the train as late as possible; and now when the boats are sailing at half-past ten you consider that the railway company should follow the steamers?—Nine o'clock and 9.15 are the last boats.

27208. You want the trains put back as well as

the boats?—We think they should do that with all the trains. There are two opposition sale-yards—those of Colgan and Robson. None of the existing trains catch the sales of the day. You have to send them the day before.

27209. Cattle-sales.—At what time are the sales?—They start at eleven o'clock in the morning. Consequently the cattle have to be sent the day before and kept all night in Belfast at our expense.

27210. Is that a fancied or a real grievance?—It is a real grievance.

27211. Mr. Sexton.—How could it be amended?—By starting a train at 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening from Ballymena for cattle and for goods. In the morning we have a motor train at 8.30 or something later. They should put a wagon or two on it for cattle. They won't take goods unless you pay 25 per cent. more.

27212. Lord Fribourg.—I was a director on that line for many years, and I never saw any deputations asking for what you urge.

Witness.—My points were always put before Mr. Cowie, and I always found him a very decent man.

Mr. Cowie (Manager, Midland Railway—Northern Railway Company's Committee).—As to any later train departure than 3 o'clock, some of the steamships sail from Belfast at 3 o'clock and others at nine; and there are three o'clock and eight o'clock boats for Glasgow and Greenock. Furthermore the shipping companies have been complaining about the late delivery of goods to them, and are contemplating giving us notice that they won't receive any goods after half-past seven.

Witness.—We should have a special train, and if it left at five o'clock it would be there at seven.

Mr. Cowie.—We have a goods train leaving Ballymena between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening. We do bring cattle by a morning passenger train, charging 25 per cent. extra.

Witness.—If I send by that night's train the places are closed up, and the cattle are allowed to be there

Oct. 11, 1907
Mr. Hugh Kewey,
Representative
of the
Ballymena
Urban District
Council.

Suggestions
as to an
improved
train service
for cattle
from Bally-
mena to
Belfast.

Railway
Company's
expression
of protest
against late
cattle.

The Commission then adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FORTY-SIXTH PUBLIC SITTING, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12TH, 1907.

AT 11.0 O'CLOCK, A.M.,

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present.—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART, Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FISHER, P.C.
 Sir HENRY JERRELL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHESON POE, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS
 SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Oct. 12, 1907. *Chairman*.—Before we commence our proceedings, I understood that Colonel Hutchesson Poe wishes to say something in reference to a matter that was referred to some time ago.

Letter from Messrs. Guinness, Son & Co., Ltd., on the subject of rates on home-grown barley.
Colonel Hutchesson Poe.—With your permission, I would like to call attention to some evidence given in the course of my examination of Mr. Richard Walsh, of Castlebellingham, before this Commission in London on the 3rd of July. Mr. Walsh was giving evidence with respect to what he considered the alleged high rates for the conveyance of barley from Dundee to Dublin, among other places, and from his answers, and from information at my disposal, I put a question to him asking whether, in his opinion, the rates charged by the railways were so high that as a matter of fact they prevented Messrs. Guinness from buying as much barley in Ireland as otherwise they would have done. His reply to my question was that that was the case. Subsequently Mr. Tullow, Secretary to the Irish Railways Committee, communicated with Messrs. Guinness, as he had had nothing brought to his notice as to Messrs. Guinness complaining of the high railway rates. Mr. Sexton, managing director of Messrs. Guinness, wrote in reply a letter, which perhaps I had better read

adopted irrespective of any question of the Railway Company, or the transit facilities afforded by them.

"Yours faithfully,

"P. Poe Arthur GUINNESS, Son & Co., Ltd.

"(Signed), CHARLES E. SEXTON,
 "Managing Director.

"J. Tullow, Esq.,
 "Irish Railway Clearing House,
 "5 Kildare-street Dublin."

I need hardly say that my question to Mr. Walsh was not intended in any way to reflect on Messrs. Guinness, who, of course, naturally, have to buy their material in the cheapest market, nor was it intended to reflect on the railway companies, who are presumably the best judges of the rates that their traffic would bear. I only wanted to ascertain, so far as it was possible to do so, whether in the opinion of this particular witness and other witnesses the rates in their experience did act as a deterrent. In view of the answer which has just been read from Messrs. Guinness, showing that the matter of the rates does not influence them at all in respect of their purchase of Irish barley, I think it only fair to them and to the railway companies to make this explanation.

Mr. Tullow.—I may just say I had an interview with Mr. Sexton, managing director of Messrs. Guinness, on this subject. After the evidence that was given I thought it only right to see him about it, and he stated that the Irish railway rates had nothing whatever to do with their purchases of barley, and practically that they had no complaints to make about them; and I may also thank Colonel Poe for kindly clearing the matter up now.

Chairman.—I think it just as well that it should have been cleared up.

Mr. Sexton.—Of course it may be observed that the witness, Mr. Walsh, made a statement which was open to cross-examination, and the other statements so far have not been the subject of cross-examination. Whatever Mr. Walsh said might have been cross-examined on the rest are no parts of statements.

Chairman.—It was stated that Messrs. Guinness were precluded practically from buying barley in Ireland when desirous of doing so in consequence of the high rates. Now they say that that is not the case.

Mr. Sexton.—Still, on examination the matter might be usefully developed.

"St. James's Gate Bowery,

"Dublin, 22nd September, 1907.

"VICEROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

"DEAR SIR,

"Referring to our interview with you on Friday last, the 20th inst., and to the point submitted by you arising out of the evidence of Mr. Richard Walsh before the above Commission,

"It is not correct to state that the rates charged by the Irish railway companies for the transit of barley influenced Messrs. Guinness in the purchase of foreign barley, such purchases being regulated by manufacturing requirements only. We desire to mention, for your information, that the Company have always given a preference to Irish-grown barley, and have been prepared to entertain the purchase of any surplus of any Irish barley of making quality offered to them, this practice on their part being

Mr. PATRICK K. O'SULLIVAN examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Patrick K. O'Sullivan, Cattle Trader, Cork.
 27213 You are from Cork, I believe?—Yes.

27214 And you are engaged in the cattle trade?—

Yes.
 27215 That is a very important trade in connection with Ireland?—It is, in connection with the South of Ireland particularly.

27216 You wish to confine your evidence wholly to the cattle trade?—Yes; I wish to confine it to the cattle trade.

27217 What particular counties do you refer to?—To Cork and Kerry.

27218 What particular railway?—The Great Southern and Western.

27219 Are the facilities given, in your opinion, adequate for properly developing this export cattle traffic?—We think the Great Southern Company lacks in not having our cattle sent away early enough for

our local boats to leave that night. Very often the cattle do not get home until after the boat leaves, and it is a great inconvenience and loss to us to hold the cattle until the next day, and probably lose the market.

27220 To what ports do you at present ship?—We send to London principally, most of our people, and to Bristol and Norwich.

27221 To what Irish port?—Cork.

27222 Have you any special complaints or grievances with reference to the way in which your cattle are carried to Cork?—I have no objection to the condition in which the cattle are carried, but they come too late for our boats. Our boats leave in the evening.

27223 The trains are so arranged that they arrive late for the steamer?—Yes.

Complaint as to late arrival of trains at Cork with cattle for export.

27224. That is what you complain of?—That is what we complain of. If the railway people attended to it that could be easily remedied.

27225. Is it at a booked train or a special train?—A special train. The stations I complain most of are Rathmore and Millstreet. The empty trucks invariably don't get there until 11 or 11.30 in the morning. Consequently there is not ample time to get them in time for the evening boat. If they arrived two or three hours earlier the cattle would be loaded in time. The cattle are on the ground and often have to wait two or three hours to be loaded, owing to the company not having the necessary trucks there.

27226. Is that a regular thing or an occasional thing?—It occurs frequently.

27227. So frequently that it is injurious to the cattle trade?—Yes, and so frequently that I am compelled very often to avoid passenger trains, which mean a charge of 33 per cent. more. If we are apprehensive of our cattle losing the boat we engage a passenger truck and pay 33 per cent. more for it. That is frequently done.

27228. Is there a regular cattle traffic from the two stations to which you refer?—On fair days.

27229. How often are the fair days?—Every month.

27230. What I gather you mean is this, that on those particular fair days the cattle trucks should be at the station earlier than they are now, so as to enable you to get the cattle to the port?—That is the complaint.

27231. Have you represented this to the railway company?—As often as we write to the railway company we get an acknowledgment of the letter and so on.

27232. Is this a serious complaint?—It is, for people dealing with cattle, especially people like me, who deal principally in young cattle for London. They are like rodents. They have got to be cashed at once. You cannot keep them on a journey. They melt. They deteriorate.

27233. Assuming that the cattle from those fairs get to the port after the departure of the steamer they have to remain over until next day?—Until the next night.

27234. At your expense?—At our expense.

27235. And the deterioration naturally deteriorates, to some extent, the value of the cattle?—Yes, and very often they lose the market for which they are intended.

27236. In England?—Yes.

27237. Is there any other complaint with reference to your cattle traffic that you wish to mention?—Yes. I think Cork is rather handicapped. We are perpetually looking for a through rate via Cork to ports in England and we cannot get it, and we are also looking for a through rate via Dublin to Glasgow from Cork and we cannot get it. About a month ago I went to Killybegs at the last fair and I asked to book my cattle via Cork to London and they said they could not do it. They would book via Waterford, Rosslare and Dublin. I could not understand why we could not get a through rate via Cork as well as via those ports.

27238. What steamship company sails from Cork?—The City of Cork Steamship Company. They are anxious for the through rate, but the Great Southern won't give the through rate.

27239. If I remember, the steamship company is a very old company and has been running for many years?—Yes.

27240. I remember it forty years ago?—Yes. It is running a long time.

27241. There was a Mr. Pike chairman?—Yes, he was the old chairman.

27242. He must be dead fully twenty or thirty years?—Fully that.

27243. You can get through rates through these other ports, but not through Cork?—Yes.

27244. And Cork is the most convenient place for your shipments?—Yes, and we could better attend to them and feed them in Cork than by sending them via any other port, such as Dublin, Waterford, or Rosslare.

27245. Can you tell us why there are no through rates for the steamship company to Cork?—We had a conference with Mr. Neale, representing the Great Southern Company and the Harbour Board in Cork, and representatives of the Cork Steamship Company. For seven years they have been agitating about

through rates via Cork and the Great Southern won't give them. They will give them by giving themselves the heavy end of the rate, but this the Cork Steamship Company cannot do. What I mean to convey is, that they would give the rate if they would get the freight locally.

27246. Mr. Norton.—You mean if the steamship company gave them as much of the through rate as would be equal to the local rate?—Yes, if it was equally divided. The contention of the Cork Steamship Company is they want all the local rate to Cork and not the fare divided up with the City of Cork Steamship Company.

27247. To let the steamship company take only the fraction of difference over between the full local rate and the through rate?—Yes.

27248. Chairman.—Do you do a lot of the loading of cattle at these stations yourself?—It ought not to be the case, but in urgent cases, when we want to get away quickly, my men and myself attend to it.

27249. Have you any complaint about the assistance given by the railway companies?—Yes. I think they are working short-handed at some of these stations. At that station of Rathmore, frequently my men and myself have got to attend to the calves. Very often I could not see a railway porter at all. There might be one or two, but that would not be sufficient.

27250. That complaint, I suppose, has been brought under the notice of the railway company?—As I said, it is utterly useless to be making complaints to the railway company. They will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint, but we will hear no more about it.

27251. Mr. Norton.—The cause of complaint is not amended?—It is never amended, but I must admit that the service on the Great Southern system has improved very considerably during the last two years. It is a lot better than it used to be.

27252. Chairman.—Then your complaints were practically based on what took place two years ago?—As I said, I am complaining now of what took place last year in these particular stations—Rathmore and Millstreet.

27253. But there has been an improvement?—A considerable improvement.

27254. There has been an improvement altogether in the mode of transit; in the construction of the cattle trucks and the way in which the cattle are treated?—Yes, but still a big percentage of the trucks are uncovered, which, I think, is an injury to the cattle. Cattle remaining for hours in a train in uncovered trucks are bound to retain the wet on their skins; they have no means of shaking it off, which, I believe, must be an injury to the beasts.

27255. Are all the trucks open?—Not all, but only a small percentage of them are covered.

27256. The modern trucks are covered?—Yes.

27257. The new ones?—Yes.

27258. Mr. Norton.—I might say that all the companies in rebuilding the cattle trucks are putting roofs on them now.

27259. Chairman.—The new trucks are all covered?—Yes, but they have the remainder already built, and they will not be dispersed with for fourteen or fifteen years.

27260. At any rate, so far as the export of cattle is concerned you think it would be a great advantage if the trucks were covered?—I believe it would be a great advantage.

27261. So much for the assistance given by the staff; what about the rates? Are the rates satisfactory?—No. I consider the rates high comparing them with other places. For instance, we are charged £3 14s a truck from Cork to Dublin. The man to whom I send calves in London can have his calves from Rotterdam to London for less than it costs to send them from Cork to Dublin.

27262. That is sending them all by sea, by direct steamer?—He tells me that the freight on calves is about 3s 6d apiece. The freight we have to pay from Cork to Dublin is £3 14s a truck, which works out at about 3s 9d apiece. We put twenty calves in a truck.

27263. Are there direct steamers from Cork to London?—Yes, but the system would be obsolete. Cattle would not be sent that way.

27264. The time occupied is too long?—Yes. They leave Cork on Sunday and would not get to London until Tuesday.

27265. You don't complain of the full truck rates so much as where there is not a sufficient number to fill a truck?—Yes. I complain they charge two-thirds

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. Patrick K. O'Sullivan, Cattle-Trader, Cork.

The G. & S. W. Railway Company alleged to be responsible for the absence of through cattle rates via Cork.

Inadequate help at cattle loading yards for trucking cattle.

A rough general improvement in working on the G. & S. W. Railway system admitted.

The necessity for the provision of more covered cattle trucks.

Local cattle rates expensive.

Comparison of the cattle rates for Cork to Dublin and Rotterdam to London.

Oct. 12, 1907

Mr. Patrick
K. O'Sullivan,
Cattle Trader,
Cork.

Suggested
reduction to
the "half
truck" cattle
rates.

Exclusive
notes for
horses and
cattle in
trucks.

of the whole for a half truck. If I put twenty calves on a truck they will charge me two-thirds for ten.

27266. The whole truck is used for the smaller quantity?—Yes, of course.

27267. What do you suggest they ought to do?—I think if I took ten, or half a truck full, the charge ought to be half that for twenty.

27268. That is your suggestion?—I think it would be a feasible suggestion, and reasonable, too.

27269. Well, we will take your opinion; do you deal in horses, cattle?—No, but friends of mine are dealing in them. I took exception to the charges for horses or cattle from Castleland to Cork. They charge 12s for a cart from Castleland to Cork, and you can put seven in a truck, which is \$4 11s a truck, and you can get a truck of cattle for \$3 3s.

27270. Is the same truck used?—Identically the same.

27271. In the case of the cattle it would cost \$4 11s and in the case of the cattle \$3 3s?—Yes.

27272. That is less than half?—Yes.

27273. You think that is an injustice to those dealing in cattle?—I fancy it would be an inconsistent system to work on.

27274. Did you consider the question generally with regard to all the railways of Ireland as to whether it would be an advantage to the country if they were either worked by some authority in Ireland or were purchased by the State?—My opinion is it would be better if the State had the railways. I believe it would increase our facilities. With increased facilities you must expect increased trade. That is my feeling about the matter. But when we do get the State in purchase I hope that the whole of the management will not be centralised. I hope we will get portions of the management at our end in Cork.

27275. Why? Let me see if I follow what you mean. Do you think it would be an advantage if the whole of the railways were purchased by the State and that the management of the railways should be in Irish hands? Is that what you mean?—That is my opinion.

27276. Having an Irish authority you would not split that authority up into various places?—I feel that Cork end ought to get a portion of the management there. It is a very important end of the line.

27277. Why not Belfast?—I am standing for my own side. The Belfast man will contend for his side.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

27278. Have you found these comparisons between railway rates in Ireland and in other countries?—I forget now where I got these figures, but they have not been contradicted by anybody.

27279. If you could verify them it would be very important. At least one of us is convinced that rates in Ireland are higher than anywhere else, but if we could have precise particulars on the point it would facilitate us very much, and for this purpose, perhaps, you could refer us to the source from which you obtained these figures?—I will endeavour to do so. If I can I will do so.

27280. We hear a great deal about the refusal of through rates to Irish exporters, but very little of refusal of through rates to importers into Ireland. They are offered every facility to come into Ireland?—That is my opinion.

27281. Anyone who wants to import goods into Ireland to get an advantage over Irish manufacturers can obtain a through rate without trouble?—I never heard they were refused.

27282. But it has been a very common incident in the course of this inquiry to hear that through rates are refused on one pretext or another to Irish exporters who want to reach English markets. Is that a fair administration of the railway system?—I consider it a great injustice to the Irish people.

27283. The refusal of a through rate both increases and penalises the traders to which it is refused?—That is my opinion.

27284. The exporter is delayed; he has to have repeated bookings, and he pays more for the service?—Yes.

27285. You complain that cattle are loaded so late that they miss the boat; that you pay 25 per cent more for greater despatch; that there is an immense staff on occasions, that the charges are unreasonable and that the rates are excessive. Do you consider that these evils would be most likely to disappear if the

railways were worked as a unit system under a public authority?—That is my belief. They could not be any worse, any way, and the probability as they would be better.

27286. That is what you might call a pessimistic view of the present and a cheerful view of the future. I take it from your complaint that on the occasion of a fair at Rathmore or Mullinstown you have neither sufficient men nor sufficient trucks?—Very often my men and myself have to open the trucks and get the calves into the trucks.

27287. That is because the Great Southern Company have to depend on their own staff alone, and possibly they do not find that staff equal to the call made for a particular place, but if the whole of the railways of Ireland were in the one hand and all the men and all the rolling stock at the disposal of one authority, would there be anything easier than to detail a staff and trucks to any point at which they might be wanted?—I think it could be very easily managed.

27288. Fairs and markets occur at different places at different times. Nothing more is wanted than to have a small reserve of men, who could be sent where they were wanted with the trucks, and if that were done these complaints would disappear?—Certainly.

27289. It is not very likely that a public authority would permit in sending trucks to Rathmore three hours after the fair, with the result that cattle are kept twenty-four hours in transit, are deteriorated in quality, and lose a market?—That invariably occurs.

27290. No public authority could stand a week over such a system as that?—Not at all. It would not be permitted. It would paralyse our trade if it continued much longer.

27291. And the public authority would get into very warm water if they did not remedy it immediately?—They would be sure to.

27292. Then again, if you had a public authority do you consider that continued complaints from year to year would be met by a mere acknowledgement and no more?—No, I am sure they would investigate the matter, look into it, and see what could be done to remedy it.

27293. Surely if they treated substantial complaints with acknowledgments and no more, then being public agents or public authorities they would either have to deal with those complaints or lose their places. Do you agree that the public authority or public agent managing the Irish railways would be likely to lose their places if they went on acknowledging complaints and doing nothing more?—That is what you would expect. Last year, some time last winter, there was a man of mine went to Abbeyfeale to buy some cattle. He bought two trucks of cattle. When he got to the station he found it was utterly impossible to get a truck. The trucks were engaged. One man had his topcoat on one; there was a sick in another, and one of the human family was standing in another; so he had to stay there until 11 o'clock at night, and he never got home to Cork until 6 o'clock next morning. I may remark that the local people there called a public meeting and protested against the action of the railway company. I think the parish priest presided on the same day and protested strongly against the way the Great Southern Company had treated the people at that particular fair of Abbeyfeale.

27294. Would you say that a public system of dealing with the whole country would be likely to bring more order and method into the service of the railways than is illustrated by that incident?—Of course they could not think of doing anything like that. If it was in the hands of a public authority they would not be permitted to do anything like that.

27295. Could a public system tolerate the refusal of through rates to Cork while every other port was allowed to have them?—I don't think it would.

27296. It runs against the principle of impartiality, which ought to be, I should think, the first principle of transport. Are not the railways now the highways of the country?—They are.

27297. Is not it evident that so far as possible those who want to use those highways should be allowed to use them on even terms?—That would be justice.

27298. And particularly that the railways of the country should not be used to the advantage of the importer of goods from other countries and to the disadvantage of the Irishman who tries to find a market for his goods in his own country. Do you agree with that?—Yes.

The granting
of through
export rates
rather than
for exports
allotted to be
detrimental
to Irish trade.

27292. You naturally desire that the Irish authority which you wish to control the railways should represent the whole country?—Cork should have its share in the management in any individual opinion.

27293. Of course, if the authority were established, then Cork or any other important centre should have such representation on the constitution of the directing body as would ensure it due attention?—I think there is nothing to prevent it.

27294. There would be a governing body, a directing authority, and Cork, no doubt, would have a local depot or department of management for the South. In these circumstances, I should think, you would probably agree that there is no danger that the interests of Cork would be neglected?—We would have implicit confidence, I think, in an Irish authority if we had it.

27295. It seems to be obvious that Irish grievances are more likely to be met and satisfied by an Irish authority than by any other; is that obvious to you?—It is.

Examined by Mr. Ascroft.

27296. You say you think it is hard that you should pay for ten beasts two-thirds of what you pay for twenty?—Yes.

27297. Look at it from the railway company's point of view. The railway company have got to run the whole truck, have not they?—They have. They would run the whole truck with one beast as well as with ten.

27298. They cannot run a half truck?—No, they cannot.

27299. Do you know that it costs them as much practically to run the truck when it is half full as when it is whole full?—Very often they run a lot of empties on a train with nothing in them.

27300. If you want to send ten beasts you have got to send a truck?—Yes.

27301. They are only getting two-thirds as much money?—Yes, but they are only carrying ten beasts.

27302. The railway company lose because you are not sending twenty beasts?—A man may have the price of ten and not of twenty. Small men must be considered as well as big men.

27303. You see that the railway company lose; you are paying more per beast, but they are earning less in the total?—What I suggest is that if half a truck be taken they are amply paid by taking half a truck charge.

27304. Then they would stand all the loss and you would not be losing at all?—I don't see where the loss comes in if it is £3 for a whole truck load and if they get 20 shillings for a half load.

27305. Would not they be doing just as much work as before by hauling the whole truck and getting only half the money. Look at it from that side. I don't think that it is fair to regard one side only?—I look at it from a purely independent side.

27306. I won't say any more. You see what I mean. You told Mr. Sexton you wanted public authorities because you think they would manage the thing better?—I feel they could not manage it worse than at present.

27307. You said that the Great Southern system has got much better during the last two years?—I admit they have improved, but they are not approaching anything like perfection yet.

27308. I don't suppose they are. I don't suppose they ever will in this wicked world; but you do want the public authorities because you think they will do the work better?—Yes, and cheaper.

27309. Suppose you could be persuaded?—I don't say you can—that the public authority would not do it either better or cheaper, would you still want it?—I don't think that would be at all possible. They are bound to do it better. They cannot do it worse.

27310. You have told us that the Great Southern did it worse two years ago?—Yes. They have improved.

27311. Then it could be worse than it is now. Suppose the public authority were such a body as the Great Southern was two years ago would you want them?—I think that would not be possible at all.

27312. Suppose they were, would you want them?—That would be supposing a very unusual thing.

27313. You are quite convinced that the public authority would be better?—Yes.

27314. Mr. Sexton?—The railway company might have to use a truck for one beast?—Yes.

27315. Would that be a reason why you should pay

at the rate of a whole truck for the beast?—I think it would be very hard.

Mr. Ascroft.—It would be a reason why you should pay more than one-twentieth of a truck.

Mr. Sexton.—On your principle the company should be paid for the whole truck if there was only one beast in it.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson, For.

27316. With reference to the grievances from which you suffer, have you made any representation to the Department of Agriculture?—Yes; we have. We submitted our complaints to the Department and it went up with the same result.

27317. I was rather struck, on looking over the last report issued by the Department and just published, with the fact that out of some forty-nine complaints with regard to rates, speaking generally, only one had reference to cattle. With regard to twenty-seven complaints as to delays in transit only one had reference to cattle also?—Complaints are very often clumped into the waste paper basket, I suppose, and the Department don't connect themselves to anything, but merely transfer the responsibility to the railway and then nothing more is heard about it.

27318. I am sure you don't wish to do the Department any injustice, nor do I wish to stand up in its favour, but the report shows forty-nine complaints, and in twenty-three cases there was very substantial redress given by the railway companies. In other words, in half the complaints which they investigated they got substantial redress for the complainants, and in reference to the complaints regarding delays they also got substantial redress. That is last year. Their action has been very successfully employed, and I only put it to you whether it is quite fair to say that they put complaints into the waste paper basket when the figures speak for themselves and their action has resulted in what I have stated?—I have no record of the figures, only my own personal experience, that if you send on a complaint to the Great Southern you hear no more about it. I am only speaking of my own personal concern.

27319. The different cases which are given in the Department's report speak for themselves. I understand you to say you consider that Cork is disadvantageously placed with regard to Dublin and Waterford?—As regards through rates.

27320. I see that Cork exported 73,000 cattle last year, which is one-fourth of the cattle exported from Dublin, and rather more than one-fourth of what is exported from other ports, and more than half what is exported from Belfast; so I think that in itself substantiates your grievance that the Cork traffic is so considerable that it is entitled to better treatment?—We think it is entitled to a through rate at least.

27321. That export of cattle represents a very considerable value?—It does. It is the staple industry of Munster.

27322. Looking at the Department's return, I see that last year the value of the live stock exported was £13,000,000, of which cattle accounted for about £9,000,000. This shows the importance of the cattle trade and the necessity of providing proper accommodation on steamers for the cattle. Have you anything to say with regard to that?—Has the action of the Department been successful in getting improvements in that respect?—The accommodation is a lot better than it was on board steamers. We have no reason to complain now. At one time we had many causes for complaint. The cattle were packed as tight as sardines in a box. Now that is not done. Whether the companies are not permitted or not I do not know.

27323. It is also the case that the railway companies in several cases have provided extra pens and increased facilities for loading trains at their stations?—Yes, still there is a great shortage of hands in loading cattle.

27324. But as regards the loading accommodation, a substantial sum of money has been put aside by several railway companies?—Yes, but in several places the sidings are too short and the cattle would get away much earlier if the sidings were sufficient.

27325. I think you will find that provision has been made in this present year by some of the railway companies for that?—In this particular place, Rathmore, I drew Mr. Neale's attention to the insufficient siding. They have plenty of ground if they would utilise it for a siding, which would load the cattle more expeditiously.

Oct 18, 1907.

Mr. Patrick K. O'Sullivan, Cattle Trader, Cork.

Ineffective representation to the Department of Agriculture.

The second of the Department's work with regard to through complaints.

The extent of the cattle shipped from Cork and the importance of the trade.

Recent improvements on railways and docks—boats as regards cattle transit.

Further improvements required.

Oct. 12, 1907. 27333. That has been represented to the Great Southern?—Yes. It has been represented through Mr. Neale, and he said he would have it attended to and nothing has been done since.

Mr. Patrick K. O'Sullivan, Cattle Trade, Cork.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

The extent of witness's traffic from Cork.

27334. From the evidence already given you are a very large shipper from Cork?—Yes. I ship a good number of cattle.

27335. Have you any idea of the number you ship in the year?—Between 5,000 and 6,000 beasts, i.e. London and Glasgow principally.

27336. That includes the calves?—Yes; principally calves. I send some strong cattle to Glasgow.

27337. Glasgow is the principal market for cattle?—Yes.

27338. And calves are your principal export?—Yes.

27339. And you send 5,000 or 6,000 calves out of Cork?—Yes; to London, and some of them are for a very peculiar purpose—for vaccination purposes. They extract the vaccine from them.

27340. How do they go to London?—By Fishguard.

27341. That is the new route?—The train would go to Rosslare from Cork and the boat would go to Fishguard.

27342. The cost from Cork to Dublin or by the route you are sending is 5s. 6d. per calf?—No; what I say was from Cork locally to Dublin would be £3 14s. per truck.

27343. You would be able to put twenty into that?—Yes. I was not talking of the number when I spoke of the Dublin traffic. I only spoke of the calves coming from Cork to Dublin.

27344. What is the price from Cork to London?—£7 per truck. They allow twenty-five for a truck. It strikes about 7s. 6d. a beast. It used to be 7s. 6d. until we got up an agitation some five years ago.

Cork and consequence from Cork to London.

Mr. William O'Reilly, M.P., representative of the Louth County Council.

27352. I see you are from the Louth County Council?—Yes.

27353. You are a deputy lieutenant of the county?—Yes.

27354. You have been deputed by the Louth County Council to give evidence before us?—Yes.

27355. Did they pass a resolution on the subject?—They did not pass a resolution, but I got the opinions of all the members of the County Council as to the present system of railways, and it was to voice their opinion as well as my own that I came up.

27356. You are authorized to speak on their behalf?—I am.

27357. Do you agree that the present system of multiplicity of railways in this country is to the advantage of the country?—I think it is intensely to its disadvantage, because it acts against the necessities of this country, which I think are rather exceptional.

27358. You think the requirements of the country itself are exceptional?—The requirements of the country, I think, are exceptional.

27359. I suppose they are exceptional in this sense, that the trade of the country is made up of what I may call retail business as compared with wholesale business in Canada and America?—That is part of it.

27360. That is one of the points?—Yes.

27361. There is a large number of small industries? Yes, undeveloped industries.

27362. With regard to rates and fares generally do you wish to make any remark?—I don't think it is worth while making any particular remarks as to rates. I did not prepare myself to make any specific complaints against individual railways. I am going rather on the broad lines of the general system, and I think you have got a lot of men from every part of the country, as well as from the rest of Ireland, who could give you accurate information as to these things, which they know personally better than I could myself.

27363. Then I will confine my questions to general subjects, rather than go into details?—I gave one or two instances of how the rates operate under the system which I deprecate to handicap the smaller industries, but they were only isolated instances. I have a case of artificial increase from Dublin to Castletown, which is, I think, absolutely exorbitant, and which comes to twopence a ton a mile.

Instances of excessive rates on the Great Northern (L.) Railway.

27364. Castletown?—5s. 6d. per head from Cork to London?—Yes.

27365. Lord PIERCE.—That is what it costs you today?—Yes.

27366. That does not seem a very excessive price?—The Dublinmen get it for a couple of shillings less. We still think we are charged too high, but we are infinitely better than we were four years ago when we paid 7s. 6d. for those particular beasts, and we now pay 5s. 6d.

27367. You said you could not send the cattle by sea from Cork to London because the time occupied by the journey is so great?—Yes.

27368. You were speaking of calves, not cattle?—It would apply to cattle also. No one would think of putting cattle on board on Sunday and taking them on Tuesday.

27369. Cattle go to London from distances far greater than from Cork to London. The journey occupies eight days, and the cattle are heavier when they get to London than when they leave either New York, Boston, or Montreal. If you got a sufficiently low rate would you not be disposed to send them by the long sea route?—No. It is an obsolete system, because we have got to work our money expeditiously. Every thing is run expeditiously now. If I buy cattle on Saturday I wish to have them in London on Monday morning, while if I sent the cattle by the other route they would not be in London until Tuesday evening. In the second case I would be waiting for my money, while in the other case I would have my money on Monday morning and be buying another lot.

27370. You don't agree with the evidence we had that cattle do not suffer as much on board ship as on the trucks?—A great deal depends on how they are loaded. If you give them ample room in the trucks they are all tight, but if you put them in too tightly they suffer on the steamer or in the truck. It all depends on the loading.

MR. WILLIAM O'REILLY, M.P., CONTINUED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

27371. What is the distance?—Forty-two miles.

27372. What is the rate?—£s. 6d. a ton.

27373. From Dublin to Castletown?—Yes. Dundalk is a further distance, 54½ miles, and the rate is four shillings. Why it should be nearly one-half less than to Castletown I don't know, except that Castletown needs facilities more than Dundalk.

27374. I suppose there is direct steamship competition?—I suppose that is it. To Castletown, which is inland, it is 7s. 10d.

27375. It is inland?—Yes. It is half as far again as Castletown, and is only 1s. 1d. more. It is inland just as well as Castletown.

27376. These are what you consider anomalies of rates that you bring under our notice?—They are anomalies of rates which support my contention.

27377. They may be explained by the railway companies?—They may possibly be explained by the railway companies, but my view is that the better case you make for the individual railway companies the worse case you make for the system.

27378. With regard to the rate from Dundalk, you mention here that they have been enormously reduced?—From where?—From Dublin or Belfast, by the coasting steamer.

27379. Have they been enormously reduced?—I am told so by a man connected with the steamship company.

27380. Was there any reason given why they were reduced?—His reason was that the railway company had a monopoly, and when the coasting steamer was started in opposition the railway company reduced the rates in order to cut out the steamer; and, if they were able to cut out the steamer, they would have a monopoly again.

27381. I suppose it was in order to keep the traffic they had previously earned?—Yes.

27382. Instead of allowing it to be taken from them by the steamer?—Yes. It is a perfectly legitimate operation on the part of the railway company.

27383. That is no disadvantage to the district?—It is a disadvantage if the large powers of the railway company can crush out a small struggling steamship company, and then go back to the former rates. It is an eventual disadvantage.

27384. Have they gone back to the old rates?—No.

They have not crushed out the shammers yet. It would be a danger if they did succeed.

27377. There is nothing wrong in a railway company trying to keep the traffic they had from others?—Nothing wrong in the world.

27378. With regard to those guaranteed railways, have you anything to say upon the general question?—I have taken the Ardee extension. That is the case with which I am most particularly connected. It runs from Drogheda to Ardee. It is a small railway, only a few miles long. Ardee was without railway facilities and the whole of that district was without railway facilities, and the Ardee branch was made, which was, to a certain extent, an advantage to the agriculturists of the district. At the same time there is the guarantee on it, on which the barony of Ardee has to pay £800 a year, which absolutely discounts the benefit which it would otherwise receive from it. I think we have had evidence given from Ardee itself directly about the baronial guarantee, but the guarantee is called up because the only credit that is given to the guarantee is for the actual traffic earned between Ardee and Drogheda. They get no credit whatever for the traffic that is carried on the main line, which would never be carried on the main line at all if it were not taken by the Ardee branch. So we suffer by having to pay the baronial guarantee. In fact we have to pay ourselves for the railway facilities which we get, and we don't get any credit whatever for the benefit conferred on the railway.

27379. What you mean is this. You think, in justice to the small railway, they should not only be credited with the actual receipts of that line but that the big line which is getting the traffic should give a rebate out of their profits to the benefit of the little line. Is that your point?—That is my point.

27380. That is a fair suggestion to make. That is done in some cases in England?—I believe it is. I have been told so.

27381. Mr. Scroten.—Voluntarily?

27382. Chairman.—Yes. That is to say, the little line gets a rebate from the large company, for all new traffic carried over that railway. (To Witness).—You think if that were done here the payment of that guarantee would disappear?—It would be considerably reduced.

27383. Do you want to say anything generally about the other light railways in the country?—No, I do not.

27384. You think they should be all treated in the same manner?—Yes. These branch lines being feeders to the main line, which are only made on a guarantee from the ratepayers, should be made without requiring any guarantee from the ratepayers, because they are necessary for that portion of the country, for the district, and any good which the district gets from having the railway made is discounted by having to pay the guarantee. We have been told—I don't know whether it is true or not—that these branch feeding lines never do pay of themselves, and therefore the guarantee is practically always called up.

27385. I suppose you agree with the other witnesses we have had, whatever the guarantee may be the railways themselves, independently of the guarantee, have been of great benefit to the district?—The railways themselves have—yes.

27386. Have you considered the general question as to what would be greatest benefit to this country in regard to railways?—May I say something of the want of connection between the lines which I had put down in my report.

27387. I thought you had covered it by what you said about Ardee?—No. My point is, you have these ordinary branch lines to feed the main line. They don't connect with the Ardee line. The Ardee line is feeding the Great Northern. It goes a little towards the west. There is a western line a little further on.

27388. Which line do you mean?—I mean if you want to get from Drogheda to Mullingar, you have various branches going into a large square district there. You have one going to Carrickmacross, one to Ardee and one to Oldcastle. None of these are connected with the yellow lines on the left, the one to Mullingar in fact. (Indicates on map.)

27389. Mr. Awerth.—Is the line from Mullingar to Kells being made?

27390. Mr. Telford.—They got an Act and their powers lapsed.

27391. Mr. Scroten.—There are four horse units in

this district—Cooteshill, Carrickmacross, Kingscourt, and Ardee?—If it were made we would have to pay a guarantee. Of course the guarantee, we were told, would never be called up. I won't say anything about that.

27392. Chairman.—Your point is, it would be an enormous advantage to the whole district if those lines were connected up with other lines?—Yes. You cannot get cattle at present from the West except you go an enormous distance around. A case was given to me some days ago of a man who bought sheep at Ballinacree. He wanted to get them down to Danleek. Instead of being able to get them by a direct way he had to send them around by Dublin. The cattle were wagoned at Ballinacree at nine o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, September 4th, and they did not reach Danleek until six or seven o'clock on Thursday evening.

27393. Mr. Awerth.—There is a tremendous crush of traffic at Ballinacree?—Yes. He says—"The sheep were so dirty and hungry you would not know they were the sheep I bought, and they did not recover for a week, and the dirt of the wagon is on a number of them still." If there had been proper facilities for taking cattle and sheep away from Ballinacree and a proper route to bring them, I don't see how that could have occurred. He told me not only that, but owing to the cautious people they take when they started, there were three wagon loads together, and two wagon loads arrived, I think, eight or nine hours before the third, so that they got broken up on the road and did not all arrive by the same train or at the same time.

27394. Chairman.—Just one or two questions about the railway system generally. Have you considered whether it would be to the interest of the country to have the railways become the property of the State?—Yes.

27395. Tell us in your own words what is your view on that question?—My view is that the railways should be acquired by the State by purchase or otherwise and should be handed over to some central authority in Ireland to control and direct, that is to say, a central authority in Ireland would appoint its own managers and so on, but the managers of the railway would be responsible to some Irish authority, whatever that authority might be.

27396. That is the opinion of your Council?—Yes, and mine.

27397. Lord Purser.—You seem strong on the point that railway companies frequently, owing to the competition of steamers, reduce their rates so as, in your own words, to crush out the competition and then go back to the old rates, and I to understand you would not object to that if there was some rule or law that the railway companies, having once reduced their rates of their own accord for the purpose of retaining their traffic, should not be allowed to increase those rates again without permission from some proper authority?—That would be a great benefit to the district. Competition lowers rates, and that would be a benefit to the district.

27398. Once you got them lowered?—If you keep them down then it would be a good thing.

27399. You would be satisfied?—Yes.

27400. Sir Herbert Jekyll.—Perhaps you are not aware that a railway company once it reduces its rates cannot raise them again arbitrarily without being subjected to challenge before the Court of the Railway and Canal Commission, and justifying their action?—No. I was not aware of it, but I presume they would be allowed to increase their rates within the statutory limits.

27401. That would be within the discretion of the Court. It is a very strong obstacle to the raising of the rates?—I was not aware of that. I am very glad to hear it is so.

Examined by Colonel HURCHESON PEE.

27402. With regard to those former rates, you say, complaining of the rate from Dublin to Carrickmacross, sixty-eight miles, 14s. 8d. that it contrasts with the same rate from Dublin to Dundalk, fifty-four miles, 5s. 4d.?—Yes.

27403. You say the actual maximum charge for conveyance for a distance of fifty-four miles to Dundalk would be 2s. 1d. exclusive of terminals, as that, as a matter of fact, the railway company charge is 9s. on the conveyance on that short distance of their line from Dublin to Dundalk?—Yes.

Oct. 19, 1907.
Mr. William O'Reilly, M.P., representative of the Louth County Council.

Proposed connecting line between the Midland Great Western Railway and the Cooteshill, Carrickmacross, Kingscourt, and Ardee branches.

Instances of excessive delay in transit of sheep from Ballinacree to Danleek.

State ownership of the railways under the control of an Irish central authority recommended.

The powers of the Court of the Railway and Canal Commission, as to the arbitrary raising of rates, even when bound to kill competition.

Oct. 15, 1905.

Mr. William O'Reilly, M.P., representative of the South County Council.

The question of passenger service between the stations of the railway.

27403. Whereas the maximum rate for conveyance from Dublin to Carrickmacross is 15s. 1d. exclusive of terminals. The actual rate charged for that is 14s. 3d. In other words for Carrickmacross, a distance of sixty-eight miles, they charge pretty nearly the full maximum rate for conveyance and terminals?—Yes.

27404. In the other case they charge very little more than half of the conveyance rate and forego the terminals altogether; you can put it in that way?—Yes.

27405. That in your opinion constitutes a great hardship on the Carrickmacross and other inland stations where there is no competition looking?—Yes.

27406. With regard to what you describe as the "loose ends," these are in addition to the Ardee line, the Carrickmacross branch, one from Rillagh to Coothill, and one to Beltrist, do you know if there are any guarantee payable on any of those extensions?—I do not.

27407. On the Ardee line the district pays £800 a year?—Yes.

27408. That means a cost of construction of £30,000 at four per cent?—That would be something like it.

27409. I think there is also a guarantee payable in respect of the Beltrist branch?—I think there is.

27410. I think there is a sum of £300 a year payable in respect of the Beltrist Branch guarantee. Suppose these extensions were continued and joined on to some of the existing lines as you suggest, the guaranteeing amount, which have already had to pay such a considerable amount, would hardly be prepared to give any further guarantee?—I should not think so.

27411. Then you would not expect that those extensions could be made by the railway companies under existing conditions?—It would not be to the advantage of the railway companies to do it, I suppose.

27412. The only way you can hope to get these extensions made and the loose ends connected up with the other systems would be by some unified authority?—Some unified authority so that the railway systems would not have certain districts to themselves, and that it would be immaterial whether they connected them or were disconnected with them.

27413. With regard to control, do I understand you to say you would be prepared to hand over control of a unified system to an Irish authority?—Yes.

27414. What would that Irish authority be?—There are no existing bodies that are at all competent, unless something like the General Council of the County Councils, but whether that body or some other body which might be established in the future ought to take control I cannot say. There is practically no central representative body in existence at present except that.

27415. So far as you are concerned, you would be satisfied to entrust the control and administration of the new system to such a body?—I would.

27416. Do you think the existing shareholders would be prepared to accept the security of such a body?—I don't know. I think a great many of them would. They would hardly be shareholders for long.

27417. Then they would have to be bought out?—Yes.

27418. You think such a body as that would be able to finance the question themselves?—I think so.

27419. You don't anticipate there would be any question reflected on of the parties into which this country is divided by such a body?—I have not the smallest doubt on that subject.

Colonel Hutchinson P.C.—I am glad to hear you say so.

Examined by Mr. Acton.

27420. I did not follow what you meant when you said the better case is made for the railway companies the worse for the system?—Because the present system of railways in Ireland is inimically bad for the country. Of course, if the railways themselves work badly and unjustly individually, then it is still worse, but if the railways under the present arrangement are doing the best they can and the best that can be expected of them, then I say it shows still more than the whole system is wrong.

27421. Assuming that the railways are doing all they can, the result is very bad and proves that the system is bad?—Yes.

27422. About the terminal guarantee, there might have been a bargain that the Great Northern Com-

pany should account for a certain amount of the profit contributed by the branch to the main line?—Yes.

27423. There was not any such bargain?—No.

27424. Your county authority agreed to the existing bargain under which the Great Northern got the best of it?—Yes.

27425. And it went before the authority in Dublin, and they agreed to it?—Yes.

27426. You say it was a very bad bargain?—Yes.

27427. Does not that seem to show that public bodies are very bad hands at making bargains?—I think the public authority that made that bargain was not a particularly good hand at making bargains. The body that made it was the Grand Jury.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—That particular guarantee was authorized by Act of Parliament. It did not go through the county suggestion.

Mr. Acton.—Still it is the same thing. The County would not be concerned, but the authorities in London, and the local body in the county, in both cases, would have to consent.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—The authorities in London would have to be satisfied that the local authority had made this bargain.

27428. Mr. Acton.—Your argument would be, you trust the existing authorities to make a good bargain; the present democratic County Councils you could trust?—To make a good bargain?

27429. Yes?—I don't think you would have the same case of making a bargain.

27430. Would not you have to make a bargain with every trader about his rates. Is not it a common business all the time?—Yes; but I am not at all satisfied that such a body would not be a better hand at making a bargain.

27431. That is your point. The old county gentry were bad at it, but the modern democratic body is better at business?—That is putting it rather wide. You want me to bid myself rather badly. I am a Grand Juror myself.

27432. You turned over a new leaf when you got your new body?—I was not in the county at that particular period; but I think other bodies might be better business men, better makers of bargains, than the old Grand Jurors were, and, after the number of years that have elapsed, and the experience of guarantees in the past, there would be more care taken in the future.

27433. You think even a public authority can learn?—Yes. Even a public authority is susceptible to instruction.

*27434. Just one other thing which is a very serious point. We should all agree it would be a great advantage to the County Councils if you could carry these lines to the West and make better connections. That is obvious. Anybody can see that. You would agree with me that those lines won't pay their working expenses and 4 per cent on the capital?—I dare say they may not.

27435. Then how is the money to be found?—The money is to be found, because if the whole system were united it would not matter so very much as at present if an individual portion of the line did not pay, provided the whole line paid.

27436. But take it this way: the whole of the lines are only just paying a bare 4 per cent?—I think they are paying a larger percentage than in England.

27437. It is 3.81, or something of that kind. There is not much margin. If you make these extensions with new capital you cut down the dividend all round?—Yes, might. I am not prepared to say absolutely that you would.

27438. It will tend to?—Yes.

27439. It will tend to counteract the increase in profits from the other lines?—Yes, if it does not develop fresh ones.

27440. Let us hope it will develop something, but, having got a lot of new capital to meet, do you think there is really much hope of getting much more out of the existing railways, directly, to meet that new capital?—Yes. I think there is a great deal.

27441. You think that the trade of the country can grow a great deal?—I think it can grow very considerably.

27442. Do you think that private capitalists would trust to that, or would you have to have a State guarantee and that the capital would be necessarily borrowed on the security of the State?—Could you get

* See Appendix No. 10.

it on the security of the railways entirely?—I don't know whether you could get it on the security of the railways. I think you could get it on the security of the State.

23433 I don't doubt that, but you agree it cannot be raised on the security of the railways unless the State revenue were behind it in some shape?—I suppose it hardly could be done.

23444 I am not asking about any particular lot of line, but on the general question?—Yes; because very probably they would do what you say. There would be the expenditure of a certain amount of capital, which would be unremunerative at first, and you would have to wait for the returns which would come in from it.

23445 You would agree with me further, that what you contemplate broadly is agricultural development?—Yes, because agriculture is the main industry of the country.

23446 That must, in the nature of things, be slow, because it implies raising new cattle, and a change of habits, so you agree it would have to be slow?—Yes, but the agricultural industry is not the only industry.

23447 No, but it is the principal one?—It is.

23448 And your district is especially an agricultural one?—Yes.

23449 So you would have to contemplate deficits to be faced at the outset?—Yes.

23450 If you went into a large policy of that kind?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. SUTTON.

23451 If the public credit, whether that of the Imperial Treasury or an Irish Executive authority, were applied to purchase of the Irish railways, would not it be your opinion that there would probably be a surplus out of present net profit after paying the annual charge of financing the transaction?—The present net profits of the railways.

23452 Yes?—I think so.

23453 That is to say, you think the annual charge for a loan to finance the Irish railways would be less than the present net profit of about £1,600,000 a year?—Yes.

23454 That would be the first surplus?—That would be the first surplus.

23455 To work one system would be cheaper, as compared with working seventeen or twenty-seven systems?—Yes.

23456 That would be the second and the larger surplus?—Yes.

23457 There you have two lines of reserve against any deficit?—Yes. You have a reserve against a deficit. Whether the reserve would meet the deficit would depend on the amount of expenditure immediately unremunerative.

23458 But that would be within the control of the authority?—It would, certainly.

23459 Something has been said about Grand Jurors; but an ex-Grand Juror can say that they should out their cost according to their cloth, and that they should not embark on an enterprise beyond their financial resources. It would not with the authority to say how far they would go?—Certainly.

23460 Let us say there is a surplus of £200,000 a year that would arise upon purchase, and a further surplus of a quarter of a million, which is a very moderate estimate, upon unified as against fragmentary management, you would have a sum of half a million or so out of which to provide the cost of making feeding lines and knitting together the loose ends and so on?—Yes; but whether that would be looked upon as a sufficient security by everybody, which is what I understood Mr. Ascroft to say, would be a different thing.

23461 To whom do you refer by everybody?—The public at large, I think, either by the State who is to pay for purchasing it, or by the shareholders who must take shares in it.

23462 If you have a first surplus of £200,000 and a second surplus of a quarter of a million, and it be held that you have the rates of the country, have you not a security at which Shylock himself would not frown?—Certainly.

23463 Which, I believe, settles the question conclusively as far as security is concerned?—Yes, with the rates of the country behind it.

23464 If the Treasury feel squeamish about the security for the loan have you any doubt that a proper Irish authority with rating powers could raise

enough capital to finance the transaction, after the shareholders who were willing to agree to conversion had taken their stock?—Not the smallest doubt.

23465 You evidently have no distrust whatever of the capacity or good faith of Irishmen to manage their own affairs?—Not the least.

23466 You have been asked would the shareholders be willing to accept the security of a system governed by a Committee of the County Councils, and you think they would?—I think the majority certainly would.

23467 And you would add that any of them not satisfied could take their money?—Yes.

23468 Does that leave any opening for complaint?—I don't think so.

23469 As to the question of rejection, solemn suggestions are made about possible injustice. Do you think there is anything so peculiar about our country or its people that a body of Irishmen selected by the people for a business matter cannot, whatever their political opinions may be, work together in a reasonable, common-sense manner for the good of the community? No. I don't think so. I have never found it so.

23470 You have had experience as a Grand Juror, a country gentleman, and in various ways. I don't suppose anybody knows the community better than you, and that is your testimony?—That is my experience.

23471 You say here, very strongly, that the backward and exceptional conditions of Ireland are due to exceptional and artificial circumstances, and, to raise these conditions, as you express it, to the normal level, must require exceptional and artificial means. The economic condition of Ireland is greatly due to the operation of laws?—So I have always understood.

23472 Trade laws, navigation laws, corn laws, laws for the repeal of corn laws, laws passed for the convenience of other countries, without regard to ours; is that not so?—That is so. That is what I mean by artificial causes.

23473 What law has brought about law should amend?—Exactly.

23474 Therefore, we have an irretrievable case for asking for such a modification of our railway system as will give the Irish exporter a fair chance in Great Britain, as against the Continental exporter, and will give the Irish manufacturer a chance of selling his own goods in Ireland?—Certainly.

23475 Do you think it is fair or reasonable to suggest that Great Britain would stoop to boycott Irish exports unless Ireland abandoned her efforts to develop or establish some manufactures for herself?—I have a better opinion of Englishmen than that.

23476 So have I.

23477 Certainly?—I don't think that has been suggested.

23478 Mr. Seaton?—I have so interpreted some suggestions. (To the Witness.)—About these rates you have mentioned in your paper. You say that the rates to competitive points, such as Dundalk, and points that are close to competitive points, are dictated to the railway company by the circumstances; but still you would say that the rates of which you complain are excessive?—Quite excessive.

23479 It is one thing to justify a rate to a competitive point, and another thing to say that much higher rates must be placed on places in the vicinity?

—Yes. I would say that £6. 8d. a ton for artificial manures to Castleblingham or Dundee is an excessive rate in itself.

23480 A popular body administering railways would have to take note of sea competition at these points where it existed?—Yes.

23481 But would it be more likely than private companies to take note of the interests of places which, although not benefited by the competition, are so near as to be prejudiced by the low rates to the competitive points?—Yes.

23482 So long as the railways of Ireland are held by a number of private proprietors who do nothing except with a view to profit, and to immediate and certain profit, is there any prospect that the surplus railway accommodation required by the country will be afforded?—I don't think there is the smallest chance of it.

23483 There is no great chance of the Imperial Treasury providing the funds?—I don't know whether there is a chance. They should do it.

23484 The only chance there would be that an authority administering the whole system and having resources in its hands would consider where the public interest justified the expenditure of those resources,

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. William O'Reilly, M.P., representative of the Leath County Council.

The security of the County Councils would be acceptable to a majority of existing shareholders.

The claim of Ireland to exceptional treatment as regards its railways rested on economic grounds.

More equitable rates and facilities under a State-owned railway system so suggested.

The chances of the Treasury providing funds for purchase.

Oct. 12, 1862.

Mr. William O'Reilly, M.P., representative of the South County Council.

The legal advocates to the raising of railway rates above the lowest point fixed.

The Court of the Railway and Canal Commission an expensive and unsatisfactory tribunal.

The present railway system leads itself to surface competition.

The financial relations of the Great Northern (L.) Railway with the Ards line, the position of the guarantors.

Mr. R. P. Preston, representative of the Irish Commercial Travellers' Association.

and would not make such expenditure a reason for a special levy upon any district?—Yes.

27483. I think Lord Pirrie made it clear that a railway company is not now entitled by law to raise a rate over the level at which it stood in December, 1862?—Yes.

27484. But it might have been very high in 1862, and they may have lowered it since?—Yes.

27485. They could raise it again?

27486. Mr. Ascroft.—No. They cannot raise it above the lowest point at which it has ever been placed?—I was not aware of that.

Lord Pirrie.—I don't think the public are aware of the fact.

27487. Mr. Sexton.—If they lower it below what it stood at the time that the English companies tried to levy the maximum rates in 1862, they must allow it to stand at the point to which they lowered it?—If they lowered it below what it stood in 1862 cannot they raise it again?

27487A. Mr. Ascroft.—No. If they are challenged in court they have got to justify it.

27488. Mr. Sexton.—I understood that the terms of 1862 were open to them at any time; but I am told that by a recent decision, the lowest point must remain the permanent point. Anyone may go to the Railway and Canal Commission, but that is a very costly remedy?—Yes.

27489. Would you say, if that is the only remedy, they can do what they please, as far as the public are concerned?—The general public don't make much use of the Commission, because they find it expensive and unsatisfactory in many ways.

27490. It appears to be only a good place for competition to fight each other. You were asked whether the railway companies have not the right to make their rates so low as to carry the traffic that is threatened by sea?—Yes.

27491. Can you tell whether the coasting steamers are doing well?—I believe they are doing fairly well.

27492. I rather gathered that their position was precarious?—I don't really know very much about them, but I believe they were in a fairly good condition. The Dundalk and Newry Steampacket Company, I believe, has been doing fairly well. It has not been doing any great things, but it is struggling along at any rate.

27493. They are really at the mercy of the railway companies, because, when you are asked has not the railway company the right to reduce its rates so as to keep traffic that does not conclude the question. Is there not the final question, that the railway company may reduce its rates lower than the point at which it is necessary to put the rates in order to keep the traffic so much lower that the steamer cannot run any longer?—Yes. That is what I am told was done.

27494. That is inherent in any private system. It would not exist in any public system?—I don't think it would.

27495. The public interest in competition would preserve a public system from such an evil?—Yes.

27496. What is the length of the Ards line?—I think 4½ miles.

27497. The capital was issued by the public by subscription?—I think so.

27498. Did the Great Northern Company contribute to the cost?—I don't know. I am not sufficiently well up on the origin of it.

27499. At any rate, so far as the capital is concerned, the public did find it?—It was found by subscriptions?—The guarantee is for interest on capital.

27500. The guaranteed capital was subscribed by private individuals?—I don't know.

27501. If interest is paid on it it must have been subscribed by shareholders?—The guarantee that we have to pay is to pay the interest. It is not to produce capital. It produces capital of course.

27502. The interest on certain capital subscribed by shareholders?—Yes.

27503. It is not found by the Great Northern Company, nor by the State?—No.

27504. Your experience as you are charged about £400 a year in respect of this line?—Yes.

27505. The Great Northern Company work the line and keep the accounts, and render accounts from year to year which show that the district must pay £200 a year?—Yes.

27506. Do they give credit to the branch line for only the receipts on its own length?—Yes.

27507. But the guaranteed line contributes a great deal of traffic to the Great Northern Railway, not only to Drogheda, Dundalk, and Dublin, but along the whole length of the system?—Yes; because none of the traffic which goes on the Ards line would go on any portion of the line between Drogheda and Dundalk if the branch line were not there.

27508. Therefore the mileage paid for the 4½ miles of the branch line is only a very minute fragment of the revenue which the Great Northern derives from the existence of this branch?—Yes.

27509. Then is it not a highly artificial and inequitable system for the Great Northern, which paid nothing for the construction of the line, that in allocating the profits they make no allowance for the great accession of traffic which they get, and which costs nothing but to handle it?—It is absolutely indefensible, except on the assumption that they got the better of the Grand Jury in making the bargain.

27510. Surely it must not be said, if people who are unacquainted with the business are drawn into an inequitable bargain, that it ought to stand for ever?—They were the cleverer of the two, but I don't see that it can be defended on any other ground.

27511. This is a question of general interest far beyond the Ards line, because there may be many cases. Have you thought of any principle of contribution by which a main line deriving traffic from a branch line, which it would not have had if the branch line were not there, ought to make some contribution or credit for the purpose of an account to the revenue of the branch line out of the benefit it receives, so as to limit the levy upon the ratepayers?—I have not thought out any working plan.

27512. Suppose the Great Northern credited the Ards line, we will say, with £1,000, and derived £5,000 a year receipts from the existence of the Ards line by mileage on their own system, do you not think some percentage of the increased receipts ought to be credited to the Ards line for the purpose of equity as regards the ratepayers?—Certainly. What percentage I have not worked out; but a percentage of some sort should be given.

27513. Mr. Ascroft, returning, said.—Mr. Sexton asked me about the Dundalk coasting steamers, and I believe my answer was entirely incorrect. Those steamers, I have been told, have been discontinued for the last six weeks.

27514. Lord Pirrie.—The railway company have not raised the rate?—No; not to my knowledge.

27515. Mr. Sexton.—The reduction of the rate by the railway company has not only kept the traffic, but crushed the opposition?—I presume that that is so. I have only just got the information, as a matter of fact.

27516. Lord Pirrie.—Were you not pleased to hear from Sir Herbert Jekyll and Mr. Ascroft that they cannot raise this rate now, the steamers being off?—I am delighted to hear it.

27517. Mr. Ascroft.—That helps the Dundalk people, but it does not help you?—It does not help me. It does not help Cullybeggan.

27518. What you have to do is to go and tell the Railway Commission that they are giving Dundalk an undue preference?—To go to the Railway Commission would mean a very expensive, slow, and unsatisfactory process.

27519. Of course; and it would take a good many tons of artificiality to pay the expenses.

Mr. S. P. PRESTON examined by the CHAIRMAN.

27520. Now, Mr. Preston, I thank you are a member of the Irish Commercial Travellers' Association?—Yes, sir, and have been honorary secretary.

27521. Do you appear before us in your individual capacity or as a representative of that body?—I appear as delegated by the Association, and likewise with the approval and support of the North and

West of Ireland Association. Our Association numbers 337 members, and the North and West of Ireland 473 members, so that touches 800 members; and then we have the sympathy and support in this matter of a great many commercial travellers who are not members of the Irish Association.

27522. But in the early part of this inquiry you

had a member of your Association before us?—No, sir; not from the Irish Association, but from a branch of the English Association, the United Kingdom Association.

27521. But this is purely Irish!—These two associations are purely Irish.

27522. Of course you are more particularly identified with the passenger arrangements of the railways?—Yes, sir; our evidence is confined to matters connected with the passenger traffic exclusively, of which we claim to possess a unique experience.

27523. Yes, we know that. I think it will shorten the proceedings if you will just be kind enough to answer two or three questions about the passenger rates. First of all, are the ordinary fares, in the judgment of your Association, fair and reasonable?—We are more particularly interested in the third-class fares, as we generally travel third-class, and the ordinary third-class fare is the usual penny a mile, and of course with that we cannot find any particular fault; but in the course of my looking into this matter I found that in England and Scotland the third-class fares are in many cases under a penny a mile. They are sometimes three farthings, and they are even a halfpenny a mile.

27524. That is for return tickets?—For single tickets. Of course the return ticket would be in some cases double the single fare, and in other cases half again; and so on.

27525. Of course it is easy for you to say this, but can you give an example?—I can, sir. I can give a number of cases. Now, the third-class fares from Glasgow, taken at random out of a railway guide, to seaside places are generally a halfpenny a mile, the ordinary third-class fares. And then I have a number here, taken at random, where three farthings per mile is charged, from Glasgow to Ardrossan, Hallybush, Bishopsleam and so on. I just take these at random, and of places under three farthings per mile there are eight or nine, and for slightly over three farthings there is quite a number.

27526. One question on that. These are all examples of Scotch railways?—Yes.

27527. Now, have you any examples of English railways?

27528. Mr. Stewart—Are these all on the Clyde?—No; Aberdeen is not on the Clyde; and Perth, Stirling and Edinburgh, these are not on the Clyde.

27529. Chairmen—Now, have you any English cases?—No, sir, I have not. I think they are all a penny a mile in England.

27530. We know they are not, but generally speaking they are?—Generally speaking.

27531. So much for the third-class fares?—On the Irish lines the single third-class fares are always the full penny.

27532. Now, what about the second-class fares?—Well, now, as to the second-class fare, you will notice by our abstract that we place first in point of importance to us personally the question of reduction of the second-class fares. We give figures showing in Ireland the difference between third and second-class fares, and these figures are equal to from fifty to eighty-four per cent. of an increase on third-class fares, while in England the difference on the one great line, the London and North-Western, and on other lines varies between fifteen and twenty-eight per cent.

27533. All of which you say there has been given in evidence before, and there is no doubt about it. The simple point is that the second-class fares in Ireland are considerably in excess of the second-class fares in England?—They are, sir, and a very grievous charge on people who travel a good deal, as we do.

Mr. Sedes—There is a short table there which I should like to see embodied in the evidence, a comparative table of English and Irish second-class fares.

27534. Mr. Stewart—It is all Birmingham, and it is not really varied. You are speaking of instances?—We took Birmingham as being a central town, in the centre of England.

27535. You have only compared one set of fares, from Birmingham only?—Excuse me, we have three or four.

27536. But one terminus is always Birmingham?

27537. Chairmen—I think we shall get on better if we take it in order. Now, the second-class fares in Ireland, we take at from you, are what percentage over the third?—From fifty to eighty-four per cent. over the third.

27538. Whereas in England, on the North-Western, you state that they are about ten per cent. more?—They are ten per cent. on the London and North-Western, with very rare exceptions.

27539. On the other railways they vary from fifteen to twenty-five per cent. over the third?—They are from fifteen up to, say, thirty per cent. on the other lines.

27540. Now, leave it there with regard to second-class fares. What about the preference given to cross-Channel passengers?—Are you going to leave the second-class fares there, sir; because it is a very strong grievance, these excessive second-class fares, their excess over the third. We believe that a reduction of the second-class fares to a point approximating to the average of what is adopted by the English lines would be a great boon to the travelling public in this country, and that, more than that, it will pay the railway companies following that policy. At present only very few commercial men travel second-class, whereas, if the difference was only twenty per cent. or so, representing, say, 2s. 6d. or 3s. from Dublin to Belfast, Cork, Galway, etc., very few commercial travellers would be found in a third-class compartment.

27541. More of them would ride second?—They would ride second, and that would be a clear gain to the railway company; and that is a point which the railway companies might consider, apart altogether from any question of unification or amalgamation, or anything of that sort. We made application to them on that point, and they refused. The next important point that occurs to us is the question of co-ordination between the passenger trains on the various lines.

27542. Now, what have you got to say about that?—By the want of co-ordination we have a frightful amount of inconvenience caused to the public and to us. Now, under a unified system that would be altogether done away with, and convenient connections would be ensured, and passengers could go from one company's line to another company's line where they came into touch with each other. We furnished in our abstract some particulars on this head, some details from the North of Ireland, showing the inconvenience imposed on passengers at present, the many delays at junction stations, and the failure of opposing lines to co-ordinate their time-tables and the running of their trains at points where those lines come in contact.

27543. Just give us one or two typical cases?—There are quite a number.

27544. But just give us two or three?—They are very numerous.

27545. Take out what you consider the most important?—For instance, at a junction, now, as I say, wherever two distinct lines meet, the time-tables are so manipulated as to spoil the connection at present, and I give you, as instances, Carran, where the Great Northern and the Midland Great Western Railways meet; Cookstown, where the Great Northern and Northern Counties meet; Astron Junction, where these two lines meet again; Palace East, where the Great Southern and Western and the Dublin and South Eastern lines meet; and Collooney, which is the most striking case in point. There are three lines running through that little village of Collooney, and each of them has got a station. They have got three distinct stations, and station-masters and staff, and if you look at the time-tables you will find that no trains meet any other trains on any of the lines, up or down. They do not clash.

27546. Lord Foster—They are not made to suit the connections?—Not at all. No matter where you are going to or coming from, if you change at Collooney you have to wait two or three hours there for a connection.

27547. Chairmen—Just give us one or two examples, I want to get the evidence on this point, so as to have it on the notes?—Well, trains from Enniskillen and the North reach Collooney at 12.15 p.m., 3.35 p.m., and 8.25 p.m. The Midland Great Western trains leave Collooney for Boyle, Carrickmacross, Sligo,

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. S. P. Preston, representative of the Irish Commercial Travellers' Association.

The probability of increased second-class fares leading to increased receipts on the Irish railways.

Serious inconvenience to passengers owing to want of co-ordination amongst through passenger train services.

Instances of faulty passenger train service connections.

The case of Collooney Junction.

Oct 12, 1997.

Mr. S. P. Frutkin, representative of the Irish Congressional Travelers' Association.

The case of
Calloway
Jennifer, 1991

etc., at 9:34 a.m., 3:35 p.m., and 6:21 n.m. These two lines do not correspond. The Great Southern and Western trains leave Collooney, for Clonsilla, Tralee, Ennis, etc., at 9:4 a.m., 12:45 p.m., and 5:42 p.m. They all differ from the others. The Midland Great Western trains from Boyle, Carrigrohane to Shannon, and Longford reach Collooney at 10:45 a.m., 1:44 p.m., and 7 p.m. The Great Southern and Western leaves from Athlone, Tralee and Clonsilla, etc., reach Collooney at 10:12 a.m., 1:55 p.m., and 4:55 p.m. There is only one of these trains corresponding with any other; that is the 1:55, and you could possibly catch that if the train was in good time. And then the trains for Enniskillen and the North leave Collooney at 7 a.m., 10:58 a.m., and 4:02 p.m. They will take a little looking into, to give you the instances of each.

37648. That is quite sufficient to go on the notes. Now, have you got a comparison of Irish and English farms in your table?—I have, sir.

22540. I am not going to ask you a single question on that but I will give the list as it is to the shorthand writer to be put on the notes and I will give copies to the railway companies. Very good you see. Since that list was compiled I made a list of the fares on the different English lines, showing the differences between second and third class, and you have got them in detail there, if there is any use in it. On different English lines the North Stafford, Great Western, and so on. They show that the differences are in the fares between second and third on those four or five different English lines.

Mr. Sexton.—That last now going in will be better for you than the other.

CHALMERS.—The one I have in my hand, which will be printed, is the excess of second over third class (England), on the North Stafford Railway, the Gashman Railway, the Great Western Railway, and the London and South Western Railway, and examples are given.

COMPARISON OF SOME IRISH AND ENGLISH FARES.

Miles.	From	To	Ind.	Ind.	Difference	Per Cent.
124	Birmingham	Eastwood	10 4	11 5	1 1	10
124	Dublin	Kilbuck	10 6	11 6	1 0	11
142	Birmingham	Kendal	13 9	14 5	1 5	15
146	Dublin	Malton	12 9	13 7	7 7	12
146	Birmingham	Leicester	2 21	3 3	1 11	10
150	Dublin	Midleton	4 2	7 3	3 1	12
171	Galway	Athlone	4 6	6 10	2 13	17
115	Birmingham	Leeds	9 41	10 4	1 3	15
115	Dublin	Belton	9 5	15 4	5 7	19
115	Cork	Maykenough	2 9	10 1	8 2	60
50	Birmingham	Northampton	4 21	4 8	9 13	19
51	Belton	Warwick	4 3	6 5	2 5	19
50	Birmingham	Liverpool	7 6	9 6	2 0	25
92	Dublin	Wexford	7 8	13 7	5 11	26
92	Cork	Lisat	7 5	15 9	8 4	34
35	Cork	Dunmurry	2 2	5 9	3 7	31
29	Birmingham	Derby	3 3	3 7	4 4	35
54	Cork	Shibbena	4 8	8 4	3 10	34
54	Birmingham	Crown	4 41	5 6	1 11	35
54	Dublin	Downpatrick	1 9	2 10	1 1	37
129	Dublin	Tamworth	13 11	19 10	5 11	39

The farms of one Irish line, viz., the Belfast and Northern Counties' branch of the English Midland, are not dealt with in above list, as the second class farms approximate in a striking degree to the English farms, for instance:—

	Std.	Std.	Difference	Per. Coef.
Belgian to Belgians, .	1.0	3.8	1.0	40
" Colombian, .	6.0	9.2	1.4	23
" Portuguese, .	6.5	9.8	1.3	20
Londoners, .	7.11	9.6	1.7	26

It will be noticed that as the distance increases the per centum difference in fares decreases.

G. S. & W. charge, 3rd to Limerick, 10/9 for 121 miles, via Nenagh—an overcharge of 8d.

Excesses for 2nd over 3rd Class—

ENGLAND

	Fares		Per Cent
	By	Ind.	
NORTH STAFFORD.			
Tickets between 10 per cent. and 15 per cent.			
Birmingham to Walsley	3 3	2 11	15
" Stoke	3 3	4 3	15
" Compton	4 7½	5 8	17
" Macclesfield	5 7½	6 3	15

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. R. P. J.
Proctor,
Representative
of the
Irish Commercial
Travellers'
Association.

Association of
the North
and West of
Ireland Commercial
Travellers'
Association.

like to reserve their opinion on that subject. They did not disagree or agree with it.

27569. Mr. Scrimgeour.—They are not adverse.—They are simply neutral. They wish to consider the matter further.

27570. Chairman.—Is it the Belfast section of your Association?—No; it is entirely distinct from us.

27571. Lord Pierce.—What are they called?—What is the proper name?—The North and West of Ireland Commercial Travellers' Association.

27572. Chairman.—Have you got the resolution that they passed?—Yes.

27573. What is the date of it?—February 15. How is it?—North and West of Ireland Commercial Travellers' Association, 15 Cameron-street, Belfast, 16th February, 1907. To the Secretary, Youngs' Commission on Irish Railways. At a meeting of above Association, held to-day, and called for this special purpose, it was unanimously agreed that we should present a report to you in support of the abstract of evidence on Irish railways submitted to you on behalf of the Irish Commercial Travellers' Association. We wish to endorse and support every item of their abstract of evidence, and all their contentions and representations contained in said abstract, with the exception of paragraphs 11, 12, and 13, on which subject we do not at present express an opinion. Signed, for the North and West of Ireland Commercial Travellers' Association, Thomas R. Gorman, President; Charles McDermott, Secretary.

27574. With that exception, the North and West of Ireland Commercial Travellers' Association, are in favour of the resolution which you read?—I say, sir, they do not approve or disapprove of it.

Examined by Mr. Scrimgeour.

27575. Of course your association, as you say, have unique experience of railways?—Oh, indeed, we have.

27576. And of the present effects of railway management?—We are pretty well ground down by them.

27577. There are a good many junctions in Ireland where two or more lines meet?—There are, sir.

27578. Is what you have said about Colliconey exceptional, or typical of what happens at junctions?—It is an extreme case, but it is fairly typical. There are other places where similar things occur, even on one particular line. For instance, if you come down from Carran, and want to go up to Longford or Roscommon, or any of those places, you have to wait a couple of hours perhaps at Mullingar or Lamy Junction; and, if you want to come back, why, you have got to do the same.

27579. Within one system?—Within one system. 27580. At any rate they are not trying to block themselves when it happens on that one system?—I think it is a bad arrangement.

27581. You spoke about connections too. This chronic failure to make connection at junctions, is it inevitable or accidental, or is it designed?—It is designed. It is worked out on their own time tables.

27582. For the purpose of not making connections?—Well, I suppose it suits their convenience to run their trains as they do, but it results in long gaps at certain places, which the public have to put up with and to suffer by. It would not be so bad as it is if there was a decent waiting-room or a place to stay in; but the waiting-room and platform arrangements are abominable, and the lavatories and animals, and everything else are simply scandalous in parts of Ireland. Everyone knows that that travels much.

27583. Does the flagrant character of the lines provide this?—Of course it does. Under a unified system there would be no such thing, because the running of the trains would be co-ordinated to suit each other.

27584. The service being framed as a unit, there would be the maximum of probability that there would be good connections?—I think that would be so. Anything else would be a lack of common sense. It is quite a common thing, and I could point you out cases in Ireland when you go to a certain town where another line runs in, and you get there at twelve o'clock and you find the other train goes at 11.50, and then you are left to stay there two or three hours till you get another train. Now, they must do that deliberately.

27585. A traveller who gets into Colliconey at any

time is apt to find that everything has gone?—Colliconey is not the only place. There are other places almost as bad.

27586. I think in your draft you give a number of cases where through connections, whether at a junction or not—I suppose it must be at a junction—are not convenient or suitable?—Now, if you are on the Northern Counties line, which is an admirable line, one of the best in Ireland—it is under the control of the Midland of England—and if you want to come, say, to Dublin, or as far as you want to come towards Dublin, from Coleraine or Ballymena or any of those places, you have got two ways. You can go to Belfast and then go by the Great Northern, but you have to wait three hours for a train; and in the same way, if you come down to Larnham Junction, you have got to wait there for a couple of hours. There are numerous instances of that sort that occur.

27587. The waiting is so frequent and so long that it can only be accounted for by the detached character of the direction, and the unifying of the direction would put an end to that?—Quite so. It seems that they lay themselves out to put obstacles in the way of travellers going from one line to another. Instead of facilitating them they put obstacles in their way.

27588. The companies agree together about rates, so that the public shall not have any benefit from competition, but they combine with each other apparently in these cases to make the maximum inconvenience for the public?—It appears like that. A study of the time-tables would convince anyone that such was the case.

27589. What do you say about this undue preference given to cross-Channel passengers?—Well, there is a certain amount of that. I will give you a curious instance of it. In Belfast, if you come from across the Channel and show your ticket at the station, you get a third-class ticket on the Northern Counties line for a week. You can stay in the train the whole time and go anywhere you like and go up and down in it for the whole week for life. Should you happen to be residing in Belfast or any other part of Ireland, and not a cross-Channel passenger, you have to pay the ordinary fares. Now, that is a very curious thing.

27590. Is that on the Midland?—That is on the English Midland, the Northern Counties line.

27591. And then, what about a commercial traveller coming from England to Cork?—A commercial traveller coming from England to Cork and back, say from Manchester or London, gets the Irish portion of the journey to Cork and back for 5s.; that is, deducting the fare to Dublin from the total of the ticket he gets to Cork and back for 5s.

27592. I understand that the Irish commercial traveller going, say, from Belfast to Dublin, if he has a third-class ticket, cannot go by the limited mail?—No, unless he pays extra.

27593. But the traveller from Great Britain starting either from Dublin or Belfast on a third-class ticket, is allowed to go on the limited mail without paying second-class fare or without paying the extra that the Irishman has to pay on the limited mail?—That is quite right. That is quite true.

27594. How the railway company abrogated that rule?—I think they have been applied to repeatedly by individual commercial men on the subject, but up to the present we have not got any remedy.

27595. You say that your important body travel generally third-class?—I think fully seventy-five per cent. of them do.

27596. I suppose they draw most of the traffic to the railways in Ireland?—Well, of course, now and again the canal gets a little of it, particularly when there is a dispute about rates, but the canal traffic, I need not tell you, is very slow and inconvenient.

27597. Then, if the second-class fare were as it is in England, without even going so low as it is in Scotland, a country more comparable with Ireland than England, is, would your body travel second-class?—I am certain that fully eighty per cent. of them would, particularly on the longer journeys, Dublin to Cork and Dublin to Galway, and so on.

27598. And, having regard to the character of the third-class accommodation in Ireland?—Yes, particularly on the Midland line, which is the low water mark of Irish railways.

27599. The Irish Midland?—The Irish Midland. I

have heard the third-class carriages on that line described as a plankton on wheels.

27600. Chairman.—That is not on the Midland line?—It is, sir, on the Midland Great Western, and you can get evidence to bear out that; and if you were going to Westport upon the plank for eight hours in the middle of winter you would not be the better of it for a long time.

27601. Mr. Acworth.—It is worse than even the visionary plankton?—I have never experienced that.

27602. You stated that the third class accommodation was very bad. Is it not quite plain that if the second-class ticket were as cheap as it is in England or Scotland there would be a great increase of men, and especially women passengers in the second class?—Most decidedly. That is quite plain to anyone who has had experience of this line.

27603. Will you state specifically what you have to say about the third class accommodation?—Of course it varies very much.

27604. It is referred to in the first page of your proof?—It varies very much on the different lines. We have not much fault to find with some of them, and the Great Northern is making efforts; but the other lines, such as the Midland and some of the other lines, are very bad. There is a want of cleanliness, and a great many things, and the enforcement of the rules against smoking, and the carriages are often very dirty, cold, and badly lit; and not alone the carriages, but the waiting rooms, and the platforms, and the stations are all alike neglected on some of the best lines—what we might call the best lines, such as the Great Southern, offered in the matter more than they should. The waiting rooms are very poor, and very cold, and badly looked after, and the platform accommodation very insufficient. There are not enough of porters to look after the passengers, and you have to carry your own luggage from one point to the other, and do everything for yourself. A third class passenger would never think of asking a porter to take his luggage for him, even though he was prepared to pay him.

27605. Mr. Acworth.—It may be pleaded that the Irish railways usually pay small dividends, and have so narrow a margin for improvement of services that all these faults have to be found with their system, but is not that a conclusive reason why the transfer to a public system should be made?—Quite so.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

27606. On the question of second class fares, of course, I can quite see it would be an advantage to the passengers if they could get the English system. The English system is a penny and a tenth or a fifth?—For the second class fare?

27607. Yes. It is 10 or 20 per cent. more than the third?—Yes.

27608. No doubt if you got it it would be an advantage to you. But have you looked at it at all from the point of view of the railway company?—I have, sir, and I have a calculation here.

27609. You think more people would go second, of course?—Undoubtedly. Decidedly.

27610. I agree with you; but do you think it would pay the company?—Decidedly. For instance, if they confined the concession to commercial travellers alone, without reducing the fares to the ordinary public.

27611. I am afraid that would not be legal?—But they would get 25 or 30 per cent. extra from a large body of men who are continually travelling.

27612. Let us see. Suppose at present one man in six goes second class?—We have calculated one in six.

27613. One in five, second class?—Do you mean commercial travellers?

27614. Yes. Is that your view?—What would that be?

27615. Twenty per cent. Twenty per cent. extra for second class I think a fair rate.

27616. That is to say there are five third class passengers to one second at present?—Yes.

27617. Now, these five third class passengers pay a penny. That comes to 5s. per mile?—Yes.

27618. And the remaining passenger pays 1-6d of a penny. And then the six passengers pay, together, 6-6d per mile. Is not that what it comes to?—Quite so.

27619. Then, supposing they all went second class, and they all paid the new fare of a penny and a

tenth, would not the railway company get 6-6d per mile, as before?—They would get whatever was the excess over the third class fare.

27620. They would get 6-6d per mile; would not they?—Per mile?

27621. Yes. They would get then the same money as before, but they would be carrying the passengers in second class carriages instead of third?—The same money as before?

27622. The same money as before, but giving better accommodation?—Do you mean to say that if they charged an 80 per cent. extra they would not gain on that?

27623. I am assuming 10 per cent. They would get a little more if they charged 20?—We are asking for an increase of 25 or 35 per cent. to bring the fare to the level of the English railways.

27624. Are you prepared to pay 30 per cent. for it?—Yes.

27625. Do you think that at that rate your own class, in which you are specially interested, would go second?—Yes.

27626. Of course at that rate it would pay them?—Yes.

27627. But I am afraid they could not do it for you only?—I do not see why they should not, for they give concessions to a large number of people at the present time, such as golfers and brand teachers and gormless and bookmakers.

27628. I do not know any instance where a railway company gives a particular class of people the power to buy ordinary tickets to go where they like at a special price?—Well, I must say, from my own knowledge, and I have been informed, that hunting men and golfers and delegates attending conferences, and bookmakers attending races, and music teachers, all get special terms. These are all specially limited tickets, and passengers have not the power to go to the booking office and say, "I want an ordinary ticket at a reduced price." They are limited in some way.

Lord Ferris.—We have had evidence of that sort about people going to fish.

27629. Mr. Acworth.—You have got to produce a voucher, and you can only use the ticket in a restricted area?—What is to prevent a commercial traveller from going to the booking office and saying, "I want a second-class ticket for the price of a third-class and a third," or, "a third class and a fourth," we will say?—Of course it might include having special tickets or else give a voucher to show that he was a properly accredited commercial traveller.

27630. Would you suggest that it would be reasonable for you, as a member of the commercial travellers' body, on production of your ticket of membership, to have a second-class ticket at a price not more than a third or a fourth over the price of a third-class ticket?—Yes, a third or a fourth.

27631. Now, about the other point that you laid great stress on, about train connections. You gave one instance, from Longford to Cavan?—Taking the Longford line and the Cavan line, the Midland runs through Mullingar in three directions. Is that what you are referring to?

27632. You stated they were bad connections?—Yes, bad connections. If you come from the Cavan side or from the North you have to go through Cavan.

27633. You said the connections were bad?—The connections are bad.

27634. The railway system there is in one hand?—Is one hand.

27635. The Midland have no interest there in discouraging connections?—Certainly not.

27636. It could not be more in one hand if all the railways belonged to the State?—No, not as far as that is concerned.

27637. Then we may assume they are doing the best they can because it is their interest?—One would think so. It is their interest financially to run them as they are, but it is not the interest of the public.

27638. What I want you to look at is this. How many trains come up every day from Longford to Jolly Junction?—Five?—I think not so many.

27639. I should have thought there were five?—We can easily see. There are three.

27640. Mr. Fettes.—Five is the number?—(With a sneer).—Well, they come in the morning and in the evening and there is a gap in the middle of the day of about six hours.

27641. Mr. Acworth.—Supposing you get five trains a day, and supposing your first train is six in the

Oct. 24, 1907

Mr. S. P. Foster, Deposition of the Irish Commercial Travellers' Association.

The lower of second class tickets of reduced fare to commercial travellers suggested.

Unstable passenger train service between Longford and Cavan.

Longford to Jolly Junction.

Oct. 13, 1867.

Mr. S. P. Preston,
Representative of the
Irish Commercial
Travellers' Association.

Unscheduled passenger
train service
between
Longford and
Carnage-on-Down.

morning and year last is ten at night, it gives you sixteen hours, does not it, and that is a train every three hours!—But they are badly divided.

27642. They could not be better than every three hours, could they? If you divide six into sixteen hours you get three hours!—I do not think averaging there is fair, because, suppose you put them in the morning and at night, and leave long intervals in the middle of the day.

27643. With a train every three hours you must have on the average a three hours wait for a train going once every three hours in the opposite direction!—Yes.

27644. You know, of course, the great bulk of the people coming from Longford do not want to go to Cavan, but to Dublin!—Oh, a lot of them would want to go to Belfast and Enniskillen.

27645. But the great bulk of them, none out of ten, would want to go to Dublin!—I would not say that. No, indeed. Most decidedly not. There is a very big traffic by cattle dealers and horse dealers and people going to fairs and wanting to get on to the Great Northern line.

27646. How many people get out at Inny Junction from the train from Longford—surely two or three?—I could not say. They might be going to different places.

27647. You must agree with me surely that the important thing is to get the connection from Longford to Dublin!—Well, it is an important thing, but not the important thing. I think the traffic up to the North of Ireland is just as important.

27648. Mr. Taylor will give us figures to show what proportion of the traffic proceeding through Longford to Inny wants to exchange to the North as compared with the part that wants to go to Dublin!—I know from personal experience that there is a considerable number of people that want to go to Glenties and Belfast and Derry.

27649. A very small percentage of the whole, I think you will find!—I think not.

Examined by Lord PEARCE.

27650. You said that on the Irish railways the difference between second and third class fares was fifty to eighty per cent. compared with fifteen to thirty on the English lines!—Yes.

27651. But you say that on the Northern Counties line it varies according to your note—It varies from twenty to forty per cent!—The Northern Counties is peculiarly very much an English line.

27652. I want it to go on the note!—It is in the Abstract.

27653. Observe—The Abstract is of no use for the purpose of a second!—It is on page 7.

27654. Lord Pearce, I want to bring it out in your evidence that according to you, taking all the Irish railways with the exception of the Northern Counties, the difference between the second and third class fares is from fifty to eighty per cent. That is right, is it not!—Yes; with the exception of the Northern Counties.

27655. What is the rate there!—The rate is from twenty to forty per cent. higher than third.

27656. That is, on the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway the rate is the same as on the English lines!—It is, on the whole, lower.

27657. It is pays the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway it should pay the others!—I do not see why not. I think the Northern Counties Railway gives the best value for the money in Ireland.

27658. And, being so progressive, has added to its revenue and popularity!—I do not know about the revenue, but it has added to its popularity.

27659. You think other railways should do the same. That is all I ask.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON, P.C.

27660. With regard to this question of second class fares, I see by the schedule that you have given that on most Irish lines the second-class fare works out at 176d. to 188d., in other words at 1½d. It is really more than 1½d., 1 1/4d., 1 3/4d., 1 7/8d., 1 1/2d., two at 1 1/2d., 1 1/4d., 1 1/2d., 1 3/4d.—taking the average it is 1½d. Surely it would be very good business for the third-class passenger, if by paying 1 1/2d., as Mr. Acworth suggests, he could go second-class. On a journey of twenty miles he would obtain all the advantages of second-class accommodation for a sum of 3d. over and above what he now pays for third-class!—That would be an advantage.

27661. Similarly the second class passenger, who now pays 1½d., if he only paid 1½d., would make a gain of 18d. in the twenty miles, which would be a saving!—At present the question is we cannot afford it. If we cannot get second class cheaper we will have to go third.

27662. Of course that is a consideration. The fares are so high that you cannot afford to go second!—Yes. It would be a saving to people who are in the habit of going second.

27663. And at present fares are so high you won't go!—We won't go.

27664. And not only would your class travel second, but also the great body of middle-class in Ireland who now travel third!—I believe they would, and a very large proportion of those who now go third.

27665. As regards these train connections, am I right in saying that the train from Enniskillen, which arrives at Collicony at 3.36 leaves Enniskillen at 1.40!—I do not know at what time it leaves.

27666. I have taken the time from the time-table, if that is right. In other words, it takes almost two hours to go a distance of forty or forty-one miles!—I would not be surprised at that at all.

27667. Therefore it is travelling twenty miles an hour!—Quite so.

27668. It arrives at Collicony at 3.36, and the train out for Boyle and Carnal, which, I think, is the next train—the 3.33—goes out three minutes before the other train gets in!—And it would be impossible, if both trains were keeping time, for anyone to get from the one station to the other in time.

27669. Would it not be easy to have an acceleration of a quarter of an hour for the distance from Enniskillen to Collicony—a distance of forty miles, for which it takes two hours—would not it be possible to have an acceleration of fifteen minutes in that distance, which would mean that they would have to go twenty-five miles an hour, instead of twenty miles, and that would enable them to catch the other train?—They are not interested in catching it.

27670. Similarly, I think the train that leaves Longford at 9.7 in the morning for Collicony a distance of fifty-one miles, takes one hour thirty-four minutes to do it!—That is the train that arrives at 10.43. Yes.

27671. That is a distance of fifty-one miles, and it takes an hour and thirty-four minutes to do it. If that were accelerated by a quarter of an hour, which would only make a rate of thirty-nine miles an hour—the present rate is thirty-two miles an hour—that would make the connection with the 10.23 train for Enniskillen that acceleration of sixteen minutes!—And with the train to Glenties.

27672. So that one would imagine the railway companies would raise no great difficulties if the matter were brought before them. No doubt they will have something to say, but it does not look so unreasonable that the train from Enniskillen which travels twenty miles an hour should accelerate itself by fifteen minutes in the two hours to make the Boyle connection. And an acceleration of sixteen minutes would enable you to make the other connection which you speak of!—Yes; a little thing would do it in some instances.—I may say, Mr. Chairman, we do not come here in any hostile feeling to the railway companies, whatever. They are very kind to us at times. It is merely that they cannot help themselves. They are victims of a bad system.

27673. Mr. Sexton.—That is the reason why it is said that the country requires to be helped by another system?—We require to change it.

27674. Mr. Taylor.—Might I say one word about the train connections. Of course we will make our case again, but I would like to be allowed to say this now. It seems to be assumed that we do not try to make connections, and I should like to give one case which illustrates what we do. The Great Southern and Western join us at Glenties. Our train is due at 2.25. We are obliged to be there at that time. They cannot get in, owing to their connections, till just before three o'clock, and we keep our train from 2.25 till 3.2.

27675. Chairman.—I know the difficulties of connections, north, south, east, and west—Glenties is one of the few places where the thing is well worked. In fact it is about the only place where connections are made.

27676. Chairman.—We are much obliged to you.

The percentage of difference between second and third class fares on Irish lines.

Suggested new scale for second class passenger.

Mr. R. G. McCORM, J.B., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Oct. 12, 1907.

27677. I think you are a Justice of the Peace, and that you appear before us on behalf of the Armagh County Council?—Yes. I am Chairman of the County Council.

27678. Take the last witness; you have heard his evidence?—No; I did not hear his evidence.

27679. You have not been in the room?—I was; but I am rather deaf, and was not able to hear his evidence.

27680. You have no general complaint against the railway companies?—No, except that they do not try to accommodate passenger traffic, particularly from one line to another—want of connection.

27681. That is the point that has been raised by the previous witness?—I heard a little of his evidence, but not clearly; I am a little deaf, and did not hear.

27682. You think that some better arrangement might be made in the timing of trains?—I think that there is no question of it at all. It should be easily improved.

27683. You say it may be easily improved. Can you tell us how any particular train could be easily improved?—There is one train I refer to in my notes. It is a train from Portadown or Armagh to the North, to Magherafelt, or that district. When you come to Cookstown the trains are so arranged that the one train leaves two minutes before the other arrives. The Great Northern arrives at 3.58, and the other train has left the same station, or the Northern Counties Railway, at two minutes before that; and that Great Northern train has remained fifteen minutes at Portadown, so that it might be easily in time.

27684. Let us follow that train. Have you made any complaints to the railway company about it?—I have, but not lately. I made complaints about the difficulty in getting connection with the Northern Counties line, but not lately.

27685. I meant this particular train?—I have not.

27686. Is it a grievance—a real grievance?—It is a real grievance, because I have had to remain there before now, for a considerable time, and could not get on. I think it is a great mistake to the public and injury to the railway companies themselves, because people won't travel if they are not accommodated.

27687. Is there any other instance that you know of?—I drew attention to the want of connection between the Great Northern and the Midland. If we want to go from Belfast west at all you spend the whole day travelling a very short distance. I have down here some figures. The only train you can get from Belfast west of Mullingar is a train leaving at 9.30, it is changed lately, and is even worse than it was. It goes to Clonsilla, remains seventeen minutes, and then gets on to Clonsilla, and remains seventy minutes, and at Mullingar you have to remain three hours seventeen minutes before you get away. You really are spending four hours forty-four minutes in waits, and are travelling four hours fifty minutes, and human life is a little too short for that sort of thing.

27688. I want to get it—there is a passenger traffic really existing between those two places?—There is a certain amount, but, of course, people won't go that way if they can help it. In fact, they go, as a rule, by Dublin; probably stay all night in Dublin and go on the next morning.

27689. To Mullingar?—Yes. That is the only way to do if they want to go west.

27690. Your Council intervened in this question, as they are, have they represented this to the railway companies?—Yes; we have drawn their attention to it many a time.

27691. What is the answer?—The answer was that there is very little traffic. But business people and commercial travellers cannot afford to spend so much time on the road, and, therefore, it is no wonder there is little traffic.

27692. Have you anything to say with reference to the fares that they charge for passengers?—The fares are not very much too high. I think they are higher than in England, and I think for the companies' own interest they would do better to lower them. They would get more passengers—at least first and second class passengers; the carriages are, to a great extent, half empty at present.

27693. Did you hear the evidence given by the last witness with regard to second class fares?—I did not hear his evidence.

27694. That the second class is out of proportion to the third class?—I do not think so very much on

the Great Northern Railway that I know best—I do not think they are out of proportion.

27695. As compared with the English fares?—I do not know anything of the English fares.

27696. Do you agree with the last witness that if the second class fare was considerably reduced a larger number of passengers now travelling third would travel second?—I do. I believe they would.

27697. You think that would be an advantage to the travelling public?—I do.

27698. And no loss to the railway company?—Certainly not.

27699. With the first class fare you are satisfied?—I think that it should not be more than 2d. a mile for single journeys and 3d. for return for the same journey. That would be quite enough for first class fares, and I believe it would pay the railway companies better than the present fares. As a business man I have always found a moderate percentage paid me better than trying to get a higher percentage.

27700. With regard to the number of trains; do you think there is a travelling public to justify an increase in the number of trains?—I do not think they require much increase. If they were made to correspond with other railways it would be all right.

27701. You approve of this present system, in Ireland, of a large number of small undertakings?—No; I think it would be far better if we had two or three united systems.

27702. You are from the North of Ireland?—Yes.

27703. We have had evidence from the North of Ireland. Some suggested two, some three, and some four systems?—I say three would be sufficient.

27704. You think that would be to the advantage of Ireland—to divide it up into three or four systems?—I believe it would. There would not be the friction between the different Boards that there is now.

27705. Then would you agree that it would be better if there was only one?—I do not think I would. I think we would then have no competition whatever, and it would be rather a mistake.

27706. I gather that your view is that it would be to the interest of companies if there were two or three large companies rather than twenty or thirty small companies, and that that would be preferable to having one united system?—I think it would.

Examined by Mr. SARGENT.

27707. You are in favour of reduction of passenger fares?—Yes, certainly. I believe it would be better for the railway companies themselves.

27708. Are you engaged in trade?—Yes. I am a linen manufacturer.

27709. And you have experience of goods rates?—Yes.

27710. Are you acquainted with the evidence that was given with regard to goods rates?—I have not read the evidence.

27711. The drift of evidence is that the export rates from Ireland, especially for food products, give the Continental producer an advantage in the British market?—Oh, yes. Once you cross the Channel and get out of the Irish railways, then the advantage is given to the foreigner.

27712. And that the Irish export rates are, in comparison, so high that they put the Irish exports at a disadvantage in the British market?—Decidedly.

27713. You would be in favour of endeavouring to put him on an even footing with the foreigner in the English market?—Certainly.

27714. And therefore you would be in favour of a reduction of those export rates?—Yes. In my own trade, just to show the difference in freight, it costs more to send goods to London than it does to Chicago.

27715. That is just a case in point?—I can send goods cheaper to Chicago than to London from Belfast.

27716. Mr. Ansell?—From Belfast?—Yes; from Belfast. I have a warehouse in Belfast.

27717. Mr. Sargent.—You do not think it a fair arrangement, that Irish producers—food exporters, who pay their share of the burden of this country, should be at a disadvantage in the markets of Great Britain against the foreigner who pays nothing?—There is no reason why—

27718. On the other hand, if you find the export rates into this country, upon articles which could be made, or are made in this country, so low that the

M. R. G. McCORM, J.B.,
Representative
of the
Armagh
County
Council.

A reduction
in second
class fares
recommended.

Present train
service
sufficient
if connections
were im-
proved.

Suggested
consolidation
of the Irish
railways into
three systems.

Competition
should be
provided.

A reduction
in the pas-
senger fares
generally
recommended.

Suggested
reduction in
the rates for
Irish goods
for export.

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. R. G. McCrum, J.P.
Representative
of the
Aranagh
County
Council.

State owner-
ship is a
means to
obtaining a
reduction in
rates and
fares
disputed.

Appropriation
of political
jobbery in
connection
with a State-
owned system.

Question of
consolidation
into two or
three systems.

Economies
resulting
from State
management
regarded as
doubtful.

Irish producers complain, as they do complain, that they are shut out, even from Irish markets at a moderate distance by the low rates at which imported goods are carried into the country, do not you think it would be a good policy to put inland rates and import rates on a more level basis?—If that is so.

27728 Assuming the evidence given here to be correct—Yes, if that is correct.

27729 As you are in favour of a reduction of fares and rates, would not you be in favour of whatever would be most likely to bring about that reduction?—I do not understand.

27730 You are in favour of a reduction of fares and rates. Would not you be in favour of whatever would give that reduction?—I presume so. It depends on how it came about—how it was done. Simply a reduction of fares, I would be in favour of it to a certain extent.

27731 You are doubtful whether we are ready for public ownership, but we are all ready for a reduction of rates and fares?—We are.

27732 And if public ownership would give that, most of us would be ready for it?—It strikes me it would do the reverse. There is so much political jobbery, to begin with. Every railway servant, when he went to give his vote, the first thing he would ask would be: "Would you raise my wages?" just as it is occurring at this moment with the tramway men in Belfast.

27733 The public authority would have as good a reply as private owners?—There is so much jobbery I think there would be a great mistake.

27734 You know jobs begin, I suppose, soon after the wheel was peopled, and politics soon after that?—Very likely, but we should try to avoid them.

27735 There is no peculiar liability to them in Ireland more than other countries?—No.

27736 And you have State ownership of railways working in other countries?—You have on the Continent.

27737 And the colonies of the British Empire and many other places?—I do not think we are ready for it here.

27738 You see, if you have amalgamation simply, or if you amalgamate into two or three companies, will not the two or three companies be stronger to have their way than a larger number would?—I think not. I think you will have intelligent men managing the railways, and they will study economy so much in their own interests in the first place probably, but their interests and the people's are the same, and if they are prospering they cannot prosper and the people not prosper.

27739 People take different views, and the railways think, sometimes, that their interest lies in a course that the public would not?—They could work more economically, and therefore, I think, the public would benefit.

27740 Would they? Would not the economy go into the dividends?—No. We know in large concerns—large business concerns—large things more economically than small concerns—and sell things cheaper. If you take a very large concern anywhere you will find that they can give you things at a more moderate price than small men.

27741 They can, if they like?—And why not the railway companies?

27742 If you make the railways into three or four or only one, the rates and fares will be where they are at present—there will be no power to change them, and, on the other hand, any saving will be at the disposal of the company?—Certainly, if you keep three or four.

27743 You may amalgamate into three or into one and yet there may be no diminution of grievance to the public. On the other hand—I am not pressing you beyond anything you wish to say, but I ask you to acknowledge facts—of public credit were used for the purchase of the lines, and if the lines were worked by a public body, whether Imperial or Irish or whatever it might be, two things would be arrived at. First, there would be a saving in the purchase, and, secondly, that the economy derivable from the working would be available?—Just the word "economy" is what spoils the story. I am very much afraid there would be no economy. There would be higher wages all round before very long.

27744 That is a speculation?—I believe it is true.

27745 I do not think that the wages of the men employed in the public services in Ireland, the rank and file, are such as to justify the view that there would be any lavishness?—I think that there would be raising, and I think that every workman would make a bargain with the member of Parliament that as far as he could he would help him to get higher wages. There would be that effort, and he would say, "I will not vote for you because so-and-so would promise higher wages."

27746 The postmen in Ireland paid excessive salaries?—No. I do not know much about them.

27747 The State is a pretty hard taskmaster, Mr. McCrum?—We hear some growls from the postmen as well as other people.

27748 The point is that the profits derivable from amalgamation under private ruling would be available for dividends?—Yes, if you have economies.

27749 What the economy under public ownership would have to be credited to the public?—Certainly, if you have the economy, but that is just the point I have doubts about that.

Examined by Mr. AEWORTH.

27750 I would like to ask that. You spoke of two or three companies. Was your idea companies that would have their own districts all to themselves, or companies that would, to some extent, still compete with one another?—Well, probably not exactly their own districts, but to a certain extent, competition. You could not simply say that one or two companies will be amalgamated and leave other lines out.

27751 You have competition at present between Belfast and Derry?—We have.

27752 Two strong companies, both prosperous, competing for the traffic?—Yes, we have.

27753 Do you want to keep that, or do you want to get one company without any competition in your district?—One company without competition would be far better. We do not want them to be cutting each other's throats at all.

27754 You think you would not mind being handed over to the non-competitive amalgamation, to either the Belfast and Northern Counties or the Great Northern?—We do not.

27755 And, of course, there would be a saving in duplicate services?—I think the common service men at the head of each railway?—

27756 Let us ask You come from?—Aranagh.

27757 Do you think that is the common impression about them?—It is the common impression of course that things are pretty well managed.

27758 Would they be content to lose what competition they have got? We have a great deal of evidence one way and the other?—I believe they would be quite satisfied with the amalgamation of the two companies you speak of, and the County Down as well.

27759 Will you not have a big company in the South, and you would have the new amalgamated company in the North, and then there would be the poor Midland Great Western to talk about?—We would have all these people competing for English traffic at all events.

Examined by Colonel HENDERSON POTT.

27760 I think you said that, in your opinion, it was a short-sighted policy on the part of the railway companies not to give better accommodation and fares for the second class passenger?—I do.

27761 Are you aware that the railway returns of the last two years show that the second class is a diminishing quantity. The return for last year, just issued, shows that 205,000 less second class passengers travelled in 1906 than in 1905?—I suppose so. I have seen the evidence in England where second class fares had been reduced, and there had been an increased traffic.

27762 That is my point. My point is that, by the railway returns, the second class traffic is gradually getting less and less, and, if things go on as they have done, it is only a matter of time till it disappears?—The principle adopted in the English railway system of having the second class not made higher is beneficial.

27754. Your opinion is that if that was the case, if that thirty millions travelling third class, a considerable proportion would go into the higher class?—I believe they would.

27755. Then, with regard to Mr. Sexton's question, he asked as to the desirability of reducing the export rates on food products, in order to put the Irish agricultural producer on a better footing with the foreigner. Are you aware that the Department of Agriculture returns of last year show that, from Denmark alone, the value of food products—butter, eggs, bacon, ham, and pork—amounted to £15,000,000 to the United Kingdom. The value of food products exported from Denmark were £15,000,000, of which (we cannot give the actual figures) 26,000,000 or 27,000,000 represents butter. The value of Irish butter exported in the same year was 23,500,000, so that if we could—and we run second in butter exported; Denmark has the first place and Ireland the second). If we could take Denmark's place, and get the first place, and put Denmark into the second place, it would mean, instead of £15,000,000, that we would be exporting something like £7,000,000?—I am afraid it is not the difference in freight that gives Denmark the balance. I am afraid it is not that.

27756. I quite agree.—Not altogether.

27757. I quite agree with you; but, at the same time, it must be a contributing factor.—We should be on an equal footing.

Mr. JOHN J. COUNIHAN

27754. You are engaged in the cattle trade?—Yes.

27755. You are a member of the firm of Counihan Brothers?—Yes.

27756. You come from County Kerry?—From Killarney.

27757. You are an extensive consignor?—On the Great Southern.

27758. How many head do you consign?—About 10,000 in the year.

27759. Your firm?—Yes, sir.

27760. What is your position in carrying on your business? Do you, personally, and your brother attend the fairs?—We attend all the fairs in Munster and Leinster, principally Munster, and send the cattle to Leinster.

27761. You buy cattle and sell them in various parts, and your traffic is exceedingly great. You consign 10,000 over the Great Southern and Western Railway?—That is the principal portion of the traffic. We send very little over any other railway, except the Cork and Brandon and the Cork and Macroom.

27762. Yours is a purely Irish trade?—Yes.

27763. Have you any serious complaint against the Great Southern and Western Railway in connection with the working of the traffic?—The service is very bad. The transit is very slow. They delay the cattle—in cases they have kept them as long as twenty-four hours.

27764. Are these exceptional cases?—They are exceptional cases, but it has occurred repeatedly that they kept them fourteen or fifteen hours.

27765. In the trucks?—In the trucks. For instance, last week I had a special from Killarney of fifteen wagons, and it was to leave—

27766. Where from?—From Killarney to Straffan.

27767. It had three stops?—Yes, and it was to leave Killarney at a quarter to five in the afternoon and it did not reach Straffan till 5.30 next morning. The distance is about 165 or 170 miles.

27768. What time did you say it ought to have been there?—It ought to have been there in six and a half or seven hours—six and a half would have given plenty of time.

27769. Well now, might there have been some special reason for the delay?—I do not know.

27770. You have not inquired?—I have not.

27771. And you have not complained?—I have complained and got no reply.

27772. Did you complain in writing?—Yes.

27773. To the Great Southern and Western?—Yes, in writing. I can get very little satisfaction for my complaint. I get an acknowledgment of the letters and that is all.

27774. You have no particular complaint about the rate?—The rates are very high. They should be

27758. With cheap transit rates and facilities we should be able to supply Great Britain, practically, with all the food products that she requires in the nature of articles that she gets from America, Denmark, and other countries?—We should be able to supply a great deal.

27759. I think you are not very sanguine as to there being any great field for motor traffic?—I would be afraid not.

27760. I don't know whether you are acquainted with Monaghan, Cavan, Louth, and these districts. Several witnesses gave evidence that there are a number of short, disconnected lines in these counties with only twelve or fourteen miles between them and some other main system, and I should have thought that in the first instance before going to the expense of making a tramway or light railway or anything of that sort, a motor service might be desirable?—I think that it would be where it has a future. Definitely, in that case.

27761. Because you know that a member of this Commission, Lord Pirrie, did, with Lord Iveagh, make a very generous offer to establish communication by motor which unfortunately fell through?—Unfortunately it did.

27762. Have not two or three motor services been established?—Not in my district.

27763. I thought, perhaps, you might be able to give some information as to the results?—We have none in the district whatever.

Examined by the CHAIRMAN.

very much lower, but I do not export any stock, and I cannot make any comparison between the rates here and in England.

27764. Yours is all local traffic?—All local.

27765. Mr. Sexton.—The rates you pay are higher still?—Very much higher.

27766. They are the highest of all?—Very much higher, sir.

27767. Chairman.—How do you mean by loading cattle in station order—in the order they arrive?—No. At the big fairs, loading in station order I mean to have the cattle that would be for Straffan loaded together to save shunting—what they call marshalling.

27768. Cattle for one place should be loaded together?—All cattle for different stations to be loaded after one another.

27769. To save shunting in and out?—Yes.

27770. That is a matter for the railway companies to see to, and in their own interest they should do it?—They have not sufficient men at the fairs to do these things.

27771. You are speaking now of fair traffic?—Yes, and every other traffic. I often see at a fair only one man to load seventy wagons of stock—one man and probably an inspector.

27772. Seventy wagons or seventy head of cattle?—Seventy wagons, and one or two men would be the most they would have.

27773. Have you complained about that?—We have complained.

Mr. Tolson.—I would like that case to be mentioned—date and place—because, from our own experience it cannot be true. I feel sure the Great Southern and Western Company do things as well as we do and on our railway it cannot occur.

27774. Chairman.—You particularly mentioned seventy wagons—Was that at some particular fair?—No, several fairs, for instance, they seldom send more than one back to Rathmore, and I have often seen sixty-five to seventy wagons loaded there.

27775. At Rathmore sixty or seventy wagons of cattle have been loaded, and the railway company never sent more than one man?—One special man to look after the fairs. Of course there would be the station staff. I am talking about the extra hands they send.

27776. Men that go about—one man?—And the inspector. I am talking about the men that load the cattle. The inspector never loads them, but just books the wagons as he gets them. They pay very little attention.

27777. Is it the system in Ireland at these great cattle fairs for the railways to send a special staff?—Yes it is, but the staff is too small, entirely too small.

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. H. G. McCracken, J.P., Representative of the County Council.

The suitability of motor road services in certain districts.

Mr. John J. Counihan, of Monaghan, Co. Monaghan, and Killybegs, Killybegs.

Complaint as to excessive local cattle rates.

Shedding to cattle coming to encourage shunting of wagons.

Inconvenience and delays occasioned by insufficient help at cattle loading banks.

Oct. 13, 1907.

Mr. John J. Conboy,
Chairman,
of Messrs.
Condon,
Brothers,
Kilbarney.

27798. And you say at Rathmore they never send more than one man?—I don't say never; I said I have seen it occur.

27799. Is that within the last twelve months?—It would be within a year and a half.

27800. Within the last two years?—Within the last two years.

27801. Has it occurred more than once?—One man I have seen at Culmroven, where I have had over forty-five wagons.

27802. Of course we all agree that live stock should be unloaded as quickly as possible, and, I suppose, that is done?—They have not the means of doing it.

27803. They cannot get to the landing stage?—They get to the destination so very irregularly that the owners will not be there to take delivery, or the owners' men, and they often lie two or three hours at the station. The railway company cannot unload, because they have no pens or paddocks, and they leave them in the wagons till the owners come to take delivery.

27804. Of course you cannot turn the cattle out on the street?—No.

27805. And therefore they must remain somewhere till the owner comes?—Yes.

27806. Is not that the rule in England?—No; or it is a rule which should be removed.

27807. Is not that what is done in most places in England?—I do not think so. They take them off and have pens.

27808. I am sure they have not pens, only at a few stations?—It could be easily remedied by getting up a few pens at the principal stations where they unload, like Haselkitch and Sallins. There are four or five stations.

27809. Mr. Seaton—Not very numerous?—Yes.

27810. Chairman—You think—I understand you to say—you think that where there are stations consisting of receiving cattle, that cattle pens should be provided, so that cattle could be unloaded as soon as they arrive?—That is so.

27811. That seems reasonable, if there is a regular traffic?—At half a dozen stations it should be done. There are plenty of paddocks at Haselkitch already, and that is the only station.

27812. I suppose there are other stations where there is this accommodation?—One only that I know—Haselkitch station.

27813. Only one, and then the cattle are unloaded as soon as they arrive?—Yes; as soon as they arrive.

27814. And you want it extended to other stations?—Three or four others.

27815. Where there is a constant cattle traffic?—Yes.

27816. That does not seem unfair.

Mr. Taffin—It is paddocks—fields—that he refers to, not pens. At a few stations in grazing districts our company provides those paddocks for the convenience of the dealers, but at a great many stations indeed few are provided. What the witness speaks of is paddocks, like what he says are at Haselkitch.

Witness—At Sallins they have no pens and a number of cattle are unloaded there, and there are no pens at all. Pens at those stations would be more suitable than paddocks.

Mr. Smyth (G.S. and W. Railway)—Sallins is eighteen miles from Dublin, and there are paddocks there.

Mr. Acworth—Do you charge for the paddocks?

Mr. Taffin—Usually.

27817. Mr. Seaton—Do you generally load and unload?—Yes; we load and unload.

27818. Is that the custom in Ireland?—The general custom.

27819. Do you know whether the rates charged by the railways include any charge for loading or unloading?—I do not know. But I have heard there is a charge.

27820. They may for all you know?—They may for all I know.

27821. Do you think that the best prospect for getting rid of all these complaints of yours would be to have the railways, as in Australia and other countries, managed in one system by a public authority?—I have not studied the question, sir, but I am sure that the railways in the South—the Cork and Macroom, and the Cork and Brandon Railway, and all

other small railway lines—it would be to the advantage of traders if they were amalgamated with the Great Southern.

27822. If you had only one system in the country—in Ireland—of railways worked for the public benefit and not to provide dividends, there would be no such thing as want of staff or rolling stock at fairs, because the central authority would take care to send the necessary staff and rolling stock?—It would. We are very much hampered for rolling stock in many places in the South, especially when there are big fairs.

27823. Transit, of course, is a matter of public interest. What you pay for carrying the cattle is added to the price?—Yes.

27824. And becomes an element of the price. There could be no deeper public interest, from a financial point of view, than the question of transit. Do you agree?—I agree.

27825. Do not you think that such a question should be administered by those who have the public interest at heart and would be responsible to public opinion, and not to private proprietors?—I am sure the poorer districts, such as Kerry and Cork, would benefit very much by it.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

27826. You know County Kerry very well?—I live there.

27827. Are things better than they were since the amalgamation?—Yes, things are better.

27828. The North Kerry line is better worked?—Very much better worked.

27829. You think everybody agrees?—Everybody that knew it before and knows it now agrees that it is very much better worked.

27830. The fact that you have lost the old competition has not done any harm. You used to have competition of the Waterford and Limerick?—It has done a little, but the better service compensates. We have a better service and plenty, or very much more, rolling stock than with the old Waterford and Limerick, and everything is very much better done.

27831. You have no doubt that is the opinion of your neighbours as well as yourself?—I am sure it is.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson P.O.

27832. With regard to want of railway facilities for the transit of your cattle, is it not a fact that in a great many instances the railway companies allow you to have the benefit of attaching your wagons to passenger trains without extra charge?—No. It would be an improvement.

27833. I think in a great many places they do?—I do not know of it.

27834. When the number of cattle to be conveyed is small, I think, in many instances, they do actually allow cattle traders to send on their cattle by passenger trains without extra charge?—Not by passenger wagons.

27835. At any rate they try and meet the traders whenever they possibly can do it?—Well, I suppose that is a fact.

27836. I am very glad to see that you acknowledge that the efforts of the Department of Agriculture have been attended with a measure of improvement in keeping the railway companies and shipping companies up to the mark. Is that not so?—It is so. They have been some good, but a great many do not know the powers they possess.

27837. I think that knowledge of their powers has been more appreciated than it was. Last year there were a good many complaints, and in many cases they obtained substantial redress, and I sincerely trust that cattle traders do not appear to have invoked the assistance of the Board as much as others, but possibly it may be due, as you say, to want of knowledge on their part, that they could do so. But I hope you will let it be known amongst the people where you live that the Department has considerable powers, and that it has been able to exert those powers with marked benefit to the trader?—The Department is anxious enough to help the cattle trade in every way.

27838. If you had any serious ground of complaint and brought it to the notice of the Board, I have no doubt that you will find they would benefit you very greatly.

The Commission then adjourned till Monday, the 14th instant.

Inefficient cattle pen accommodation at the principal cattle discharging stations.

Haselkitch station as exception.

The work of the loading and unloading of cattle devolves on the owners.

The amalgamation of the smaller railways by the larger corporations recommended.

FORTY-SEVENTH PUBLIC SITTING, MONDAY, OCTOBER 14TH, 1907,

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTT, BART., Chairman; Sir HERBERT JEKILL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON FOR, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Mr. R. H. DORMAN, C.B., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

37836. What are you, Mr. Dorman?—I am County Surveyor of Armagh.

37837. Have you been in that position some years?—Twenty years.

37838. Have you had any experience as surveyor in any other county?—When I was young I was on the Cork and Bandon, and extensions of that railway. I had also some experience in promoting lines in the Co. Curragh, and, of course, reporting on various schemes in the County Armagh since I came there.

37839. What are the particular railways that serve your district?—The Great Northern entirely.

37840. From what point of view do you wish to give evidence before us?—I don't wish to give evidence, but I was asked by the secretary if I could attend before the Commission.

37841. Have you any suggestions to make with reference to rates and fares in your district. I suppose, as county surveyor, you are principally concerned with road materials?—Yes, to a great extent.

37842. Have you any suggestion to make with reference to that?—Yes. I consider that a special rate of twopence per ton per mile should be allowed for the carriage of road material for distances up to six miles, and 1½d. for distances over six miles, and a still lower rate in special cases. If these rates were adopted between 3,000 and 4,000 tons would be carried by rail for use on the County Armagh roads, and some from the County Armagh could be rail to the County Tyrone.

37843. Have you any information as to what rate is now charged?—I think they charge about twopence all over, and it is rather too much. We cannot afford to pay that.

37844. Is that traffic carried on railway waggons?—Yes.

37845. Is the loading or unloading done by the sender or consignee?—The loading is done by the sender, and it is taken off by the consignee.

37846. The railway companies do no service in connection with either loading or unloading?—Not that I know of.

37847. Have the county a depot anywhere?—No, but we propose to get a siding and to start a quarry from which we could send off about 4,000 tons a year.

37848. You would prepare the stone and send it from the siding?—Yes.

37849. But you have not got the siding yet?—No, but we propose to in the immediate future to have that.

37850. Have you anything to say about through rates generally?—No.

37851. Have you anything to say about passenger fares?—I think it a great pity there could not be through bookings. You cannot book from Armagh, where I live, down to Cork and to stations beyond it in the summer sometimes I am very anxious to go down to Cork, and sometimes also in the winter. In the summer there is what they call the Killarney express. The train gets into Armagh-street at 10.30 from Belfast. The Killarney express leaves at 11. It is just a rush for people to get from Armagh-street to Kingsbridge, but if they had a train over the loop-line, taking passengers round by Glenties, it would be a tremendous convenience to a great many people.

37852. Do you think it is sufficient traffic to justify a train service?—I don't know that. I should like to remark that the last time I travelled down I got to Armagh-street at 10.40. There was no train to Kingsbridge until 11.57, and I travelled by that 11.57 train to Kingsbridge in order to catch the train to Maryborough, but, as I got to Kingsbridge, that train was signalled. The guard was waving his flag to send the train off. I just caught it because I made a rush for it; but they told me at Armagh-street they would not guarantee that I should catch the train. Evidently they were not on the look out for passengers at Kingsbridge; and I think it is a pity that there is not a proper connection between these two towns.

37853. I may sum up generally what you mean in this way, that you consider through passenger fares should be extended so as to enable passengers to book through, and that, if possible, arrangements at junctions should be made to fit in with those of other companies?—Yes.

37854. You have no general complaint against the railway companies?—No.

37855. Do you consider that the motor-car traffic has seriously affected the roads in your district?—Not at all. Except light motor occasionally we have no motor traffic. I should like to see it everywhere in the county.

37856. What is motor traffic?—Yes.

37857. For sparsely populated districts where railways would not be justified, you think a motor-car service would come in?—Yes; but I consider Armagh is not sparsely populated. It is generally a very thickly populated county.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

37858. You have been a public officer in India?—Yes.

37859. By the application of public resources in that country, and by regarding the question of transit as one, many lines have been constructed, which resulted in a great increase of the internal and export trade of India?—Yes, I am sure that that is so.

37860. Those lines were not at first lucrative?—No.

37861. And some of them are perhaps not so justified?—I think not.

37862. But yet the public interest was greatly served by the construction of those lines?—Yes. When I was in India I was principally in charge of irrigation and canal works, but the enormous population that used to go up and down the river at the rate of one mile an hour was something extraordinary before the railways were constructed in my district.

37863. The most remarkable result has been, I believe, by bringing the produce into contact with the great markets to produce an extraordinary development, if we are to judge from Mr. Morley's speech, in the export trade of India?—It must have been.

37864. Ireland, like India, is in some sense an undeveloped country. It is not quite fully developed in agriculture, and it is very undeveloped in manufactures. It is still very much undeveloped in agriculture.

Oct 14, 1907.

Mr. R. H. Dorman, C.B. County Surveyor, Armagh.

The extension of through passenger bookings and the improvement of through train services recommended.

The desirability of providing road motor services in certain districts.

The industrial development of India under State administration of the railways.

The agricultural problem in Ireland alleged to be analogous to that of India.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. R. H.
Dunham, C. B.,
County
Surveyor,
Annapolis.

A system of motor car traffic suggested.

27865 Yes; agriculture is not at all so developed as it ought to be, and the country is still more undeveloped in manufactures—Except in the North.

23856. Except in the Belfast district, and as to two or three industries in Dublin!—Quite so.

23867. Would you consider it of great economic importance so to arrange the transit system as to aid in the development of agricultural and manufacturing industry?—In any possible way. In my county I think a system of motor-car traffic would be the most economical method to adopt.

27958. Whether you think of railways or motor-cars, the establishment and maintenance of these small supplemental services involve expense!—Certainly; but in the County Armagh I think it should be made a pressing concern in a very short time.

27860. Of course; but the preliminary question always is, where is the money to be found for providing the service and maintaining it until it becomes remunerative. I think you say somewhere in your abstract that the making of the Newry and Ready line will give the last line in your part of the country that will be likely to pay.—Yes.

22720: How was the capital of that line provided?—I don't think it has been provided yet—that is, the line from Newry to Keady. Portion of it is, I think, a Treasury grant, and portion a guarantee by the Newry Urban Council.

27871. A large portion of it is provided from public funds?—Yes.

23872. The inference may be drawn that if the line had to be made by private capital it would not have been made?—Yes.

27073. Do you agree with the evidence given before the Commission that in Ireland, as in India, many links and leaders are required to develop the country which cannot pay at once, or for a time, but which in the public interest should be made?—There are members, to my knowledge.

2324. These loans can only be made in one of other of certain ways—either by the existing companies or private capitalists, or by the districts or the Treasury.—That is so; and the railway companies are not inclined to extend, as far as I know, just now.

23875. Certainly; the railway companies will be governed strictly by the consideration, whether the line can be made pay, and pay promptly?—Quite so.

22026 The private capitalist is also governed by that view?—Quite so.

87877. And the Treasury will not provide the cost unless there is co-operation?—No, I think not, unless it is sanctioned from the district.

[illegible]

27879 As the interest affected is an Irish one, and it is Irish trade interests that have to be developed, do you consider that an Irish authority—established, of course, by Act of Parliament—would be more likely to attend efficiently to Irish wants than any other authority?—Certainly.

27890. I believe you do not wish to give evidence upon great questions of policy, but I believe that you will rather favour that you call a policy of absorption. I think that the great lines should be taken up, as owned by the principal railway companies. For instance, the Great Southern, I think, should take all the lines on the County Cork, which is my native county. I don't know Kerry or other counties. I know the district served by the Cork and Brandon and Macroom lines, but I can see no reason why they should not run a through service of train to these places, along by a joint concern.

27881. I think your evidence shows that the defile and bad connections most inconvenient to the public occur at the junctions between the greater lines.¹
That is so.

27062. If all these greater lines were to absorb the smaller lines they would have more time and attend to give to the work of blocking each other!—You can pretend that some way or other.

STANLEY. How!—I will leave that to you.

28894 For fifty years the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary have all been busy trying to settle the railway system: Parliament, Select Committees, Board of Trade permission, Railway Commission judgments, have not succeeded in allaying public dissatisfaction. Certainly, they have not. In many

57835. Can a system so complicated as the railway system, conducted by private Boards, ever be effectively controlled from the outside, or must you not always take hold of it, if you want to reform it?—I think the business of the railway companies is extremely well conducted, except on certain points, and I think those matters of detail should be settled without any great difficulty. I would not say that that would necessitate the entrusting of them in one department. Whether it is a right thing or not I could not say.

1988). If your amalgamation steps ahead of one person, and you allow three or four systems to co-exist, you're invited, you would bring the policy of co-existence to a maximum, because you will reduce the responses to the existence of the lesser ones. You would give them more time to devote to baffling each other as they do at present!—Quite so; if they thought right, they would have more time to baffle each other, and block one another, and interfere very much, with one another.

27840. You are quite aware, I take it, of the principal complication in this case. It is a question of finance. It is urged that the export rates to England, as compared with the import rates from the Continent, damage the Irish exporter, and that the export rates from England, as compared with the inland rates for Ireland, hamper and restrict the Irish manufacturer. The question is, therefore, one of incidence of rates?—So I have heard.

27888. If you amalgamate the companies into three or four companies, or into one, and still leave them in private hands, it is obvious that the rates and laws will remain where they are. They would not be touched by amalgamation—I could not say that.

27520. More amalgamation would simply mass the lines together. It would have no effect of itself upon the rates and fares!—Not of necessity. It does not follow as a consequence.

27890. If you attempt by law to reduce the rates and taxes you see the critical financial question about arms. The railways of Ireland have only about half-a-million a year now to pay the ordinary dividends on £24,000,000 stock. Would it be a promising effort to try to get the Legislature to pass a law decreasing reductions in rates and taxes that would eat away at something that half-a-million—? I don't think it would.

27901. Then amalgamation will not touch the public interest, so far as it concerns the local rates and fares. On the other hand would not there be a saving in the working expenses?—Yes.

THOM: If you amalgamate the lines, and if they remain in private hands, the money saved in working expenses would go to increase the dividends!—A gas man would have to

27993. That would be excellent for shareholders. How would the public interest be benefited?—I leave that to the members of the Commission, who are better acquainted with the working out of this than I.

27094. I put it to you, assuming that the application of public credit to the purchase of the lines left a good surplus out of the present net profit, after paying the charges for the loan, and that while working under a public authority made a large saving in the working expenses, these two savings might be used for a large experimental reduction in rates and fares, without any cost to the public?—It would be a great advantage.

Examined by Mr. LEWIS

23825 Were you in India when there were the systems alongside. There were guaranteed railway independent railways, and State railways?—Yes, but I should mention that I was not on railway work in India, although, of course, I know that.

19996. You know that it is so!—You

27097. Do you know that lately there has been rather a strong reaction in favor of encouraging p

Newry, Keady, and Tyron Railway, provided capital.

Further railway extension improbable, unless by State aid.

The administration of the railway by an Irish authority

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vate enterprise rather than building new State lines in India?—No. I don't know that.

27928. Then I won't ask you about it. You mentioned the case of the inconvenience expressed in going from Belfast to Cork, and to places beyond Cork. The great bulk of the people coming from Belfast are coming to Dublin?—Exactly.

27929. The great bulk of the people going to Cork do not come from beyond Dublin?—No.

27930. You realise that the trains must primarily be run for the benefit of the service to and from Dublin?—No doubt.

27931. There always must be a difficulty about making connections?—I don't think there should be.

27932. You think it might be better?—I don't see any difficulty.

27933. Take, for example, your case of the Killarney express. Suppose 100 people from Dublin, for some reason—I don't pretend to know—think eleven o'clock is the best hour, it would not be reasonable to get it back to 11.15, and make them all late for their dinners in Killarney for the sake of two people from Belfast?—They would not be late for their dinners. There is a luncheon car on the train.

27934. Suppose eleven o'clock is the best hour for Dublin, it would not be reasonable to make a later start for the sake of two per cent. of the passengers?—Not if there were only two per cent. to suit.

27935. I dare say the railway companies will, when their turn comes, tell us about the amount of through traffic. Do you say that either the Great Northern or the Great Southern and Western have any interest in booking the traffic through Dublin?—I am sure they have not.

27936. So, if it is interfered with, it may be stupidly or it may be because they are doing the best on the whole?—I think they could do better.

27937. They have no interest in not making the best connections they can?—I cannot see how they could.

27938. They have got the same interest as the State would have if it were all one system, as far as you see?—Yes, so far as I see.

27939. In a good portion of Ulster you have got competition between two first-rate and prosperous companies?—Yes, towards Derry.

27940. And at a good many points they see competitors more or less. Do you think Ulster would be willing to give up competition, or rather to keep it? We had a gentleman on Saturday, who said he would be willing to let it go, and put the two companies together?—Certainly, I would rather have competition.

27941. You would rather keep both companies?—I would; but there is very little competition in Ireland, and there is not likely to be much.

27942-27943. You personally would rather keep competition?—I would.

27944. Which do you think is the common opinion, either to keep it or to let it go, and put the two companies together?—Personally, I think competition is very good. There has been considerable amelioration on the lines to Derry recently, I know.

27945. What is the common opinion, do you know, or would you rather not express an opinion?—I think the common opinion is in favour of competition.

27946. Take another case. There is competition to Limerick by the Great Southern and by the Midland line?—I don't know that.

27947. You would expect them to say the same thing?—I dare say they would.

27948. Then it would come to this, that your idea of absorption would only apply to absorbing systems like the Cork and Brandon and Cork and Maroon, where it would not affect competition?—That is what I have stated.

27949. You would not carry an absorption to the extent of getting rid of competition where it now exists?—No, I would not.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON, P.O.

27950. With regard to competition, does not the present system of private ownership lend itself to this, that eventually, in the desire to get traffic, one from the other, and do the best they can in the interests of their shareholders, competitive reaches such a point that it cannot be used any more, and then it ceases to act as a protection to the general public?—Of course there is that limit to it.

27951. And it may be necessary, in the interests of the lines, for them to cease to cease mutual understanding, in which case competition practically ceases to exist, and the result is a monopoly—a justifiable monopoly—in the interests of the shareholders?—No doubt.

27952. It might turn out that, in the interests of the general agricultural and of the manufacturing, that the present system should be eliminated by a system of State ownership?—State ownership would be under control?

27953. Yes, as regards rates and fares?—No doubt.

27954. Then, again, with regard to the clearance of transport being a necessary element in the development of this country, we often hear a great deal about the assistance which cheap transport gives to Continental countries; is it not also the fact that cheap transport would have been of very little effect unless accompanied by combination and co-operation on the part of the producers on the Continent, in sending their consignments in very great bulk, which enables both railway companies and shipping companies to give very low rates?—I am sure that that is a necessity that should be seen to, and it is not seen to in this country.

27955. Is it not a great want on the part of the people in this country?—Undoubtedly.

27956. In spite of the efforts of the Department to introduce co-operative principles, and of the facilities which are offered by the railway companies, if the agriculturists would only send their consignments in greater quantities, they still are not alive to the importance of such a system, and each man prefers to act for himself?—It is insufficiently developed as yet, but the system will come on, I am sure.

27957. You think there is an improvement in the gradual adoption of co-operative principles?—There is undoubtedly. I am a farmer myself.

27958. You say it is very desirable that low rates should be given for large quantities of road material, and in such cases you thought the opening up of some quarries in Arragh would be very beneficial to the adjoining county—Tyronne?—Yes.

27959. I think Tyronne is in a rather bad state as regards road material?—It is in the southern part, about Dunganon.

27960. I know Tyronne myself. I know the roads in my district are pretty bad. Whereabouts would be those quarries you speak of, with the expected output of 3,000 or 4,000 tons?—Portladden, Lurgan, and Keady.

27961. From there it would go to Cookstown and Dunganon?—From Portladden it would go to Cookstown and Dunganon.

27962. What would you say the present rate was?—For short distances they have asked me to pay something like a shilling, for something like three miles. For distances over that I think it comes to about two pence per ton per mile.

27963. For ordinary road material?—Yes.

27964. That seems very high?—Yes.

27965. Mr. Croker, Berrington, Schiffer?—Give me some particular point?

Witness.—From Portladden to Verner's Bridge, a distance of nine miles, is 6d. is the rate.

27966. Colonel Hutchinson, P.O.—At any rate, both in the interests of the quarry industry and of the roads, and of the motor traffic which you advocate, it would be very desirable that every facility should be given to provide cheap transit for road material?—I think so.

27967. Motor traffic, you say, can be applied with very great benefit to feeding the existing railways?—Yes.

27968. A good many witnesses, speaking of Tyronne County, with which I am acquainted, have referred to the want of connection in the centre of Tyronne. I suppose it would be specially well adapted for motor traffic, in the first instance at any rate, in order to see whether the resources of the country would eventually justify any expenditure being incurred on the construction of railways?—I think it would be an excellent thing to experiment with a motor service in the first instance, to see whether, later on, a railway would eventually pay or not.

27969. Of course, if that is desirable, the first essential is to have all the roads in good order?—To have them sufficient for the traffic.

27970. For the motor traffic?—Yes.

27971. Then, in connection with the time occupied in train journeys, you mentioned that the 9.50 train

On 14, 1897.

Mr. R. H. Dorman, Esq., Clerk, Barrow, Strang.

The necessity for combination and co-operation on the part of Irish producers.

The desirability of cheap transit for road material.

Hint for road material from Portladden to Verner's Bridge.

The institution of road motor services in certain districts.

Oct. 14, 1907

Mr. E. H.
Curran, C.E.,
County
Surveyor,
Armagh.Complaint to
slow
passenger
train service
between
Belfast and
Armagh and
Armagh and
Warrenpoint.

from Belfast to Armagh takes an hour to perform the journey. I don't know whether that has been altered since you made that abstract—I think so.

27942. According to the *October Guide* you are not nearly so well off now. To reach Armagh you have to leave Belfast at 8.30, and you do not arrive until 10.45; so that it takes 75 minutes to go thirty-five miles!—Yes.

27943. With regard to the connection between Armagh and Warrenpoint, I see, according to this time-table, it takes 35 minutes to go twenty-eight miles, which is, roughly speaking, about nineteen miles an hour!—There is great delay at Geraghwood.

27944. One train takes 35, another 32, and another 75 minutes. You cannot call that a satisfactory service to a watering place like Warrenpoint. Your

service up from Warrenpoint is rather better. Have you anything to say about that?—I took those from the time-table at the time, barely two or three months ago.

27945. From Warrenpoint to Armagh is considerably quicker!—I am sure it is quicker, as the ten minutes to five gets in at 5.40—that is fifty minutes.

27946. Has any representation been made to the railway company to give a better service to Warrenpoint?—Not recently. But recently they have improved the service from Warrenpoint to Armagh, by letting the Dublin train away before the Armagh train comes up from Warrenpoint. Then they have a motor service from Geraghwood to Portadown, and it has improved the thing immensely, getting to Armagh.

Mr. James KENNEDY examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. James
Kennedy,
Builder,
Dublin, re-
presentative of
the Queen's
County
County
Council.

(See 27945-5).

Extent of
the Stradally
stone quarry
industry.

27947. You are a builder in Dublin?—Yes.

27948. And you appear before us on behalf of the Queen's County County Council?—I think not. I appear before you as a quarry owner in Queen's County, at a place which is not served by a railway.

27949. Then you have no authority to speak on behalf of the County Council?—I don't think so. I have been communicated with by them.

27950. But you are not a member?—No.

27951. You appear here in your individual capacity as a builder in Dublin, and wish to be heard before as some questions with reference to stone quarries?—Yes.

27952. Where do you work your stone quarry?—At Stradally.

27953. Is it yours?—It is rented by me from Colonel Cosby.

27954. Is it building stone?—Building stone.

27955. How many men do you employ in the quarry?—I employ, for the last three or four years, an average of between 90 and 100 men. Stradally is in the line between Athy on the one side, and Maryborough on the other.

27956. Speaking generally, you say nearly 100 men are employed in that quarry?—Yes. There are not quite so many in it now. There are about sixty in it at the present moment.

27957. Where is the stone principally used?—The stone is principally used in church-building.

27958. In Dublin?—Yes. It has been used extensively in Dublin. I am, at present, using it extensively in Dublin.

27959. How do you get the stone to the railway station?—By cart.

27960. How far is it from the nearest railway station?—The nearest railway station would be Maryborough, but the road is very bad, and very hilly, so that we come to Athy.

27961. What is the most convenient station?—I think Maryborough is the nearest, but Athy is the most convenient for carting.

27962. That is on the Great Southern line?—Yes.

27963. You have eight miles cartage to Athy?—Yes.

27964. What do you estimate the cost of that?—Five shillings a ton.

27965. Has any suggestion been made, to your knowledge, to the Great Southern Company, or any other persons or company, with reference to making a railway between these points?—Not in my time. I have been there only four years, but I heard that some time ago they were endeavouring to get a railway.

27966. Do you think there is sufficient traffic to justify a railway being made to the quarries?—Not to the quarries, because the quarries would depend principally on the necessity for cut stone, principally in Dublin, but, at the same time, if you were sending this cut stone to any part of Ireland, no matter where, it would be a convenience, and it would reduce this five shillings a ton enormously.

27967. What is the rate from Athy to Dublin, when you get the stone loaded and trucked?—5s. 3d. a ton for worked stone; rough stone is cheaper—four shillings a ton.

27968. I suppose you don't object to those rates per ton, as railway rates?—No.

27969. Your point, principally, is that it would be

an immense convenience for that district if the railway were extended in the direction of the quarry?—Yes. At the present moment we pay five shillings and 6s. 3d. that is 11s. 3d. a ton to bring the stone forty-five miles. We are not in it with foreign importation; that is taking Portland as being a foreign stone.

27970. That comes by sea, direct to Dublin?—It is water-borne the whole way. I have brought cargoes of rough Portland stone to Dublin for 5s. 6d. a ton, and the men were, in some cases, a month out at sea, dodging the bad weather, and it is done now the same way.

27971. What is your output about now?—Our output at present is about twenty-five tons of worked stone per week. We have been doing thirty and thirty-five. I built a church in the County Carlow that took a considerable quantity of that stone. On account of the peculiar position of the quarries we had to send it by traction engine right across thirty miles of country. If there was a railway to Stradally I could have saved money by sending stone on it to Bagnalstown, and cart from that station to works.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON PEE.

27972. This industry is of recent growth?—The quarry is there a long time.

27973. It has only been worked by you for the last few years?—It is being worked extensively by me, but I may say it is very superior stone, and very useful stone for good work.

27974. I know the stone well. Is it a difficult stone to work?—Not as a limestone. It is a much easier stone to work than Ballinacree stone.

27975. Or than Killybeg stone?—It is very much easier than Killybeg.

27976. That is a hard stone to work?—Yes. Some of the hardest beds in our quarry are not as hard as Killybeg stone.

27977. At all events, you employ nearly 100 men and would pay out about 25,000 a year?—Yes.

27978. Even with the reduced output in winter time, and at slack times, and owing to other causes, it would come to 25,000 a year?—It is a fine thing for Stradally. We have been getting good supplies out of it. There is no difficulty in getting any quantity of stone out of it provided there was some way of getting it away. I often thought of some sort of steam traction between the quarry and Athy.

27979. Has there been any effort made in that direction?—No. I thought of it myself. If there was any very large job on I would put a traction engine on the road myself.

27980. Chairman.—You mean for a large contract of stone?—Yes.

27981. Colonel Hutcheson Pee.—Is the building trade in this country, in your experience, on the increase or decline?—It has its ups and downs. I remember it going up and down like a wave in my own time. At the present moment it is pretty low.

27982. It has been low for the last year?—Yes. It has been low all over the Three Kingdoms.

27983. With an output of a couple of thousand tons a year from the quarry, assuming even that the whole of it went to Dublin, that would only mean a payment of 2500 or 2700 to the railway company?—That is so.

Location of
the quarryExtent of
the quarry
industry.Location of
the quarry

27984. That would hardly justify the expense of constructing this particular railway?—Not for the quarry, but there are a good many other things down there.

27985. Of course, we have had evidence as to the use it would be in connection with the Castlecoroner coal?—The canal runs close by, within four miles, but it is no use whatever for stone.

27986. Why don't you use the Grand Canal?—The rates are absolutely higher than the rates by the railway.

27987. For stone on the canal?—Yes.

27988. Can you give us the rate?—The rates are 9s. 6d. a ton for worked stone, and they had no crane to lift the stone. I offered to put a crane on the bank at Viceroy Station, and to use it myself, and I asked if I did that what would be their rate, and they said the same thing.

27989. Is it the first instance we have had of water carriage being higher than railway carriage?—I don't think they want stone at all. They are afraid that some of the workmen might drop the stone on to the bottom of the boat. It is impracticable to send it by canal for several reasons.

27990. It ought to be more advantageous, because there is no necessity for quickness of transport?—Yes, it ought. It is the best way for carrying stone, because there is no shunting, and no danger of dropping the stone. There is always that danger in railway wagons.

27991. Although you are not a member of the Queen's County County Council, I think it is a fact that the Queen's County County Council asked you to give evidence on their behalf, and in the interests of the county?—Yes.

27992. Chairman.—But you are not authorised?—I am authorised. I had a letter from the County Council asking me to give evidence.

The Secretary.—He was appointed by the County Council.

Witness.—I am not a member of the County Council.

27993. Colonel Hutchinson Pae.—You are asked to give evidence on their behalf?—Yes, because they are very much interested in the development of industry in the county. With regard to limestone, I may mention that these happens to be no great quantity of it near Dublin. You have to go to Navan for good limestone, to a place called Ardaraheen, to Sheshaheen, below Drogheda, and except a quarry at Slieve there is no limestone quarry nearer than those two, while my quarry is forty-eight miles from Dublin. I want to point out that limestone has been extensively used in Dublin, and would be more extensively used if it could be carried somewhat more cheaply. What happens is this. When a man got an order for stone from the old quarries, and I used to do it myself before four years ago, it was necessary to wait so long for these small men in these little places to supply them with stone that everybody got out of humour. The employer got out of humour; the architect got out of humour and would not specify the stone. The result was that the limestone industry of Ireland got into a very bad state, and quarries were half idle all the year round. One quarry started a good many of them. There are about a dozen stone-cutters altogether belonging to the place who have been trained there, but when we went there there was no stone-cutting at all working in the place. These men belonging to Stradbally were working elsewhere in the quarries through the country. Therefore we have to bring these men from a distance in some cases. They have to put these heavy car fares. Again, there is one thing which I may point out. If there was a railway there a good many other things might be done. For instance, there are parts of the country where they want broken stones for macadam and the like of that. We have some very hard stuff, and if we had a stone-breaker we could send road material to those places, if we had a railway. We could also send lime to Dublin if we had a railway. I have gone into the thing. We could compete with the lime in Dublin and send very much better lime than they get in any part of Dublin. Even in my own case I got through about six or seven tons of lime in an ordinary week. I use a lime kiln in the quarry. They are very easily built.

27994. What quantity of lime is brought by rail into Dublin?—There are not very many tons of lime brought into Dublin by rail, for this reason; there

is a rough limestone, coarse mountain limestone, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, and at St. Dolougha, six or seven miles to the north, and at Faldra, about eight miles out. These places and Castleknock supply the greater part of the coarse lime used about Dublin. They get a stone down at Clonsilla, in the County Kildare, which they send up to Dublin. That is burned there in Dublin. They call it Kildare lime, and it makes a very white mortar. A man will pay about five shillings a ton for carrying lime to Dublin from St. Dolougha, and there is no way of bringing it except by rail.

27995. Has any representation been made to the railway company to see if they could meet you as regards providing a traction engine for drawing the stone from Stradbally?—Nothing has been done about it.

27996. I suppose you are not in a position to go to the expense of establishing such a service yourself?—Unless there was some very big quantity required. I would do it then quickly enough.

27997. The bulk of the orders come in small quantities?—No. The work that is being done for the last four years is mostly for jobs of my own. I have built three churches.

27998. You say if builders were certain of getting the stone as they want it, it would develop trade very considerably?—Yes. I have supplied some of them with rough stone in Dublin. They wanted to cut it themselves and I gave them the rough stone.

27999. Surely, in these circumstances, it would be worth your while, or that of the railway company, to provide some cheaper mode of transit than cart?—I have looked into the matter of steam traction. They make nowadays very good machines that travel six or six miles an hour and carry six or seven tons. They are used in some parts of Ireland. The Austrian iron ore people, I am told, with a machine called the Wallis, can do three journeys of six or seven miles in the day. That is, they carry about twenty tons and cover a distance of forty miles, including the return journey, which is made empty, with one of these tractors. From various things which I know I have come to the conclusion that a tractor would do this work and probably pay at about two shillings a ton. One man can drive a tractor, and you do not require a man in front on a bicycle with a flag in his hand or anything of that sort.

Examined by Mr. Acton.

28000. At present it seems to me you send away about 2,500 tons of stone a year. You don't send away any uncut stone abroad?—We have sent some 800 or 900 tons of rough stone to one builder in Dublin.

28001. It is not a regular trade?—No.

28002. The rates kill it, as I understand?—Yes.

28003. I calculate that if you had a railway to Stradbally your present traffic would only pay about £100 a year?—Yes, in addition to the amount paid at present.

28004. I am assuming you paid 3d. a ton per mile?—Yes.

28005. Suppose the railway cost about £30,000—probably it would be something like that figure—£1,500 would be required for interest alone?—Yes.

28006. Not allowing for working expenses?—Yes.

28007. You would have to increase the traffic very largely before you could begin to think of paying for the railway?—It will never increase as long as the place is in the condition in which it is at present.

28008. Are there any other industries there?—There is a large malting place, the Norrons, a very large place, and they bring a lot of stuff by canal, and are constantly carrying backwards and forwards to the canal.

28009. And the railway might get that?

28010. How many men does that employ?—I don't think it employs a great number of men. It is a new up-to-date place, provided with machinery.

28011. Do you think it probable that a traffic worth £100 a year, and the other traffic at Stradbally, would increase to £2,000 a year, or twenty times as much?—I don't think so.

28012. Then the capital of the company would require to be paid for by somebody else?—No doubt about that. Of course, it might go farther to Castlecomer district, in the same line of country. I am not a Queen's County man but I know it is down that line.

Oct. 14 1897.

Mr. James
Kernan,
Barrister,
Dublin, Re-
presentative
of the Queen's
County
Council.

The suggested
provision of
steam traction
by road from Strad-
bally to Athy.

The impropri-
ety of
Stradbally
traffic in
itself paying
for a new
railway.

The value of
the Stradbally
traffic in the
event of a
line being run
to Castle-
comer.

Oct. 14, 1897.

Mr. James
Kearney,
Builder,
Dublin, Re-
presentative
of the Queen's
County
County
Council.

Collected *Hatchess* Fee.—Colonel Cosby gave evidence in favour of a line to Portlannington, and this was an alternative scheme.

28013. Mr. Aswerth.—Your evidence comes to this, that besides the direct coal traffic from Castlecomer, substantially would give traffic on the road?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. SKEAT.

28014. The County Council wished you to give evidence as an expert with regard to the condition of this industry?—Yes.

28015. Could you say about how much of the value of this stone in Dublin is represented by the freight and cartage?—About one-third of the value in Dublin would be represented by the freight and cartage. I sell the stone in the quarry at 1r. 6d. the random block, and it would cost the buyer and of a shilling to bring it to Dublin. It takes 2s. a ton cartage in Dublin, and 9s. from the quarry—that is 11s. 6d. for rough blocks of stone.

28016. Does the stone in Dublin represent one-third of its value to the builder in Dublin in cartage and freight?—Yes. We may send stone from Stradbally in two conditions. They may say: "Put it on the rail for me, at so much, at Ady, and I will pay the cartage to Dublin," or they may say: "Bring it to Kingsbridge for us and we will take it from Kingsbridge." But the way I have supplied it is, I have delivered the stone in the builder's yard in Dublin. What I call the cost of freight and cartage is what I have to pay from the time it leaves my quarry until it is delivered in the builder's yard in Dublin.

28017. Of the whole cost of the stone transit to Dublin represents one-third?—Yes.

28018. The transit costs you 11s. 6d. a ton if you bring it to Kingsbridge?—That is for wrought stone. I am talking of rough stone now.

28019. Take them separately. Take rough stone first?—I have supplied rough stone in Dublin at 2s. 9d. per cubic foot, and something like from 10d. or 11d. of that went for cartage.

28020. Now take the wrought stone?—The wrought stone varies in price according to the way it is worked, but it runs roughly from six to ten shillings a cubic foot.

28021. Mr. Aswerth.—How many cubic feet to the ton?—Fourteen.

28022. Mr. Skeat.—How much is represented by the cost of transit?—It is only a little over the same thing—about a shilling a cubic foot.

28023. The additional value of the stone represents the wages of labour?—The cost of bringing up the rough stone would be five shillings, plus four shillings, plus two shillings. That would be eleven shillings. The amount for carting the wrought stone to Ady would be five shillings. Carters charge the same for carting rough or wrought stone. The railway charges 6s. 8d. Five shillings, plus 6s. 8d., plus 2s. cartage in Dublin, is 13s. 8d. for wrought stone as against 11s. for rough.

28024. What proportion of the value of the wrought stone is the thirteen shillings?—An average of about one-sixth.

28025. Now we have it that the cost of transit is about one-third the value of the rough stone, and on an average one-sixth the value of the wrought stone?—Yes.

28026. Can you tell me what proportion of the value of Portland stone in Dublin is represented by the cost of transit to Dublin?—Yes. Portland stone costs about two shillings a cubic foot at Portland, in what is called random blocks, big blocks—not rubbish. Then it is put on to sailing vessels, and it comes across for from 6s. 6d. to 7s. a ton, that is, I may say, about sixpence per cubic foot. That is about one-fourth.

28027. What proportion of the value of Portland stone in Dublin is the cost of transit?—There is cartage in Dublin, a couple of shillings per ton, that would be about threepence per cubic foot.

28028. I want the comparison?—The comparison between the two is against us.

28029. What proportion of the value of Portland stone in Dublin is the cost of transit to Dublin?—About twenty-five per cent.—sixpence or sevenpence a foot as near as I can get it. Portland stone is a little higher than our stone, and there are about fifteen feet to the ton. That is only a small difference.

28030. And the transit system, as it stands, puts you at a great disadvantage, as compared with Portland stone?—Yes. Here is a point. In connection with the College of Science job, in which they are about to use Portland stone, so you can get Portland stone across at these rates you save nearly sixpence a cubic foot. Of course, then, they get a softer stone than the Irish limestone to work, and I suppose the architect puts some value on the buff colour of the stone, as compared with the bluish-white of the Irish limestone; but it hits the limestone industry in Ireland.

28031. Is the Irish limestone better suited to the climate and atmosphere of Ireland than Portland stone?—Certainly.

28032. When this struggling industry is made more difficult by the relation to each other of the transit systems?—Yes.

28033. Chairman.—There is the cost of bringing the stone from the top of Portland down to the quay for shipment?—Yes; but the charge I have given is the charge of the stone put on the ship. What I am putting together is the price paid to the man who put it on the ship at Portland, and I am adding that to the freight.

28034. Mr. Skeat.—With regard to railway and canal rates, have you heard that there is a private agreement with the object of securing that the canal shall not compete with the railway?—I don't know of it. I have found the railway people reasonably easy to get on with. They carry the stuff very safely. They have not far to carry it of course.

28035. Is limestone in much demand for building?—Is very considerable demand.

28036. Not in Dublin only, but throughout Ireland?—Certainly.

28037. Could the industry be greatly developed by favourable transit conditions?—The limestone industry of Ireland would be greatly developed if conditions were favourable. There are parts of Ireland where there are enormous quantities of limestone, which would give the very largest blocks—larger than anything in Portland.

28038. And people are leaving the country for want of work?—In many cases they are. A short time ago I was in Derbyshire, in a big quarry over there which produces a sandstone. St. George's Hall in Liverpool is built of that stone. I was surprised to find a man from the town of Killybeg in charge of the place. He had to leave this country. He is a man who would be an acquisition to any country. He left twelve years ago. He got into a technical school in Manchester. Now he is the managing man of this place, over the stone-cutters, and takes all the orders, and sees that they are carried out.

28039. Are there not many countries into which you could go and find Irishmen, who could not earn a crust at home, in charge of important industries?—His brother is working for me down in Stradbally.

28040. The development of this limestone trade would be one of the ways of checking emigration and giving increased revenue to the Government, and adding to the security for land purchase annuities, and so on?—One thing about stone-cutters is, they are a very hard-working body of men—not only the limestone men, but the granite men.

28041. And your industry, under all its difficulties, sustains 100 men on good wages for the artisans and for the labourers?—Yes. Of course to understand the thing properly, if we brought the stone to Dublin and worked in Dublin we would pay more wages in Dublin. If we carried the rough stone to Dublin and worked at there we would carry thirty per cent more stone than we should want, so it would level up the price.

28042. Well, upon this industry of years also hang the lime-burning industry and the masonry employment?—Yes; of course these things could be done, and, no doubt, there are parts of that boggy country that want masonry. Of course they make use of gravel. Gravel is to be found in the bogs.

28043. But the development of the lime-burning industry would lead to the spending of more money on other industries, and to sending less out of the country for foreign masonry?—Yes. It is a particularly fine lime that can be burned there too. I used it in building a church in Carlow County costing 215,000.

Cost of conveyance of Stradbally stone to Dublin.

Its percentage on the value of the stone.

The percentage of freight on value in the case of Portland stone.

23044 You know pretty well that since the railway system began in Ireland, about fifty or sixty years ago, they have been trying to get a line from the Castlemore collieries to communicate with the ports. Do you know that?—I heard that.

23045 And some of the projects contemplated a line running through Athy from Castlemore?—Yes.

23046 Do you think that such a line as that, developing the great colliery industry of the Leinster coalfields, might be remunerative?—I am not acquainted with the coalfields at all; but I am sure that if they were working them it could certainly be remunerative, because I know from the prices that we pay for coal in Strathally that it is a cheap coal.

23047 It would be a cheap coal if favourable transit conditions existed?—Yes.

23048 But when they have to cart the coal to consumers, of course, it becomes dear?—For lime-burning we cart it from these coalfields. I think it is thirteen miles from Castlemore, where the stuff is brought, and we bring it for burning lime, and find it extremely cheap. The stuff for burning lime is got for a shilling or one and a shilling a ton. That, of course, is a kind of rubbish, small stuff; but at the same time if we wanted to burn here, and had to bring the stuff from Dublin, it would cost us about ten or eleven shillings a ton.

23049 The evidence here is that the market for that coal is really limited to the cartage radius, and, therefore, the coal is of little use to the country?—Yes; and I think there is a lot of English and Scotch coal comes into Strathally.

23050 Certainly. My point is that as they cannot send the Castlemore coal by rail, it has really no market beyond a cartage radius?—Yes, that is so.

23051 Now if the line were only from Strathally to Athy, and not from Castlemore, you do not expect that line would live upon limestone if it were made?—No, it could not.

23052 It is a populous district?—There is a great number of people living in Strathally.

23053 A populous district?—Not nearly so populous as formerly.

23054 I suppose, like other parts of the country, it has suffered from emigration?—Yes.

23055 And, of course, from the multiplicity of causes that you describe in your evidence?—Yes.

23056 And there is a large agricultural output?—Yes, large.

23057 And there are other industries?—Yes.

23058 And there is a considerable population there?—There is a considerable population there.

23059 And the district has not only a large agricultural output, but also requires supplies of goods?—It does.

23060 What would be the length of this line?—To Strathally is, I think, about eight miles from Athy.

23061 And it might cost about £40,000?—£5,000 a mile, I suppose.

23062 And that might mean, perhaps, in interest, £1,600 a year, in addition to working expenses?—Yes, all that.

23063 And I suppose the Great Southern and Western Company have considered the question of the construction of such a line?—Well, I never heard that they did; but, of course, I heard that the thing was talked about some years ago.

23064 It might not immediately pay?—It might not, though in the course of time it might become a remunerative line. The people all round about Strathally, and the part of that neighbourhood that I know, are a very industrious race, a good class of people, hard-working and sober and respectable, and they seem to be people that, if there were facilities for them, would get along better than now.

23065 In a case like this, where there is a doubt of profits being made, would you expect private capital to construct the line?—No.

23066 Whether the capital of an existing company or a new one?—No.

23067 You could hardly expect the district to guarantee after recent experiences?—No.

23068 And suppose the question of transit were regarded in Ireland as in Australia and in Germany and other countries, as a question in which the whole country is interested, and that a public authority, as Irish authority, with resources in its possession, were, taking this system as one, to construct lines in districts such as this, provided the public interest required the construction of the line, and used State resources to defray the cost of the line, without a special levy on any district, do you think that that would be the most likely way to meet such wants as you have described in your evidence?—I suppose that is really the only way. I might say, sir, that, in my opinion, of course, a narrow gauge railway would be of very little use for carrying stone. It is not like a thing you put into sacks, it is not like soda of turf; you cannot transfer it easily.

23069 *Chairman*—You cannot transfer it. It must be the same gauge. There is no doubt about that.

23070 *Mr. Serle*—I think we have done with the narrow gauge?—No; you cannot transfer the stone.

23071 Don't you think that future lines are likely to be made to the gauge of the great lines?—Yes; but, of course, that is another question.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. James Keenan, —
Belcher, —
Belcher, —
Representative of the Queen's County County Council.

Cost of proposed line from Athy to Strathally.

The improbability of private capital being forthcoming for railway extension in this district.

The application of public funds by an Irish authority to the provision of railway extensions is recommended.

Future railways to be broad gauge.

Dr. GEORGE GIBSON, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

23072 Dr. Gibson, I think you are a Justice of the Peace, and you appear on behalf of the Donaghadee Urban District Council?—Yes.

23073 You have been requested by that Council to come before us?—To come here.

23074 First of all, I suppose you want to refer, generally, to the railway arrangements in your own district?—Yes, sir.

23075 Where is this place?—Fourteen miles from Belfast—twenty-one and a half by rail.

23076 Current *Hutchinson* Pic.—By rail, twenty-two—twenty-one and a half or twenty-two by rail. The railway runs round by Comber to catch the connection there, and that makes the difference. Direct we would be fourteen miles.

23077 *Chairman*—Then, about the fares?—The ordinary passenger fares are 2s. 6d. first class, 2s. 6d. second class, and 2s. third class. We consider they are excessive, considering the number of miles from Belfast is only fourteen, but they are not higher than on other Irish railways. We submit that.

23078 In other words, your geographical position, you think, would justify a lower fare, but on the distance travelled by railway the fares are in proportion to those of other railways in the country?—Quite so.

23079 Now, are there any special fares given on any particular occasions?—There are special fares given on two days in each week by the 10.20 and by

the 1.20 trains. Those special fares are 2s. 6d., 2s., and 1s. 6d. We consider that if those fares were granted by the half-past eight and nine a.m. trains as well it would be a boon to the travelling public of Donaghadee.

23080 The cheap fares are limited to certain trains?—To certain trains.

23081 And your suggestion is that it would be a great boon to the district if the fares were available by earlier trains?—By earlier trains as well as by the two at present.

23082 I suppose they could come back at any time?—They could come back at any time.

23083 And you would like to be able, when those cheap fares were in operation, to go at any time?—Yes.

23084 That is what you suggest?—Yes.

23085 Now, I suppose those are market tickets?—Well, there is a third-class market ticket issued by the morning train only, each day, to go and return. It is 1s. 6d., and we think it might be reduced to 1s. 6d., so it is a very slight reduction for a market ticket from 2s. A still further reduction to 1s. 6d. would, undoubtedly, encourage traffic.

23086 Is there a considerable population in your district?—It is sparsely populated or thinly populated. We have a population of over 2,000 in Donaghadee, and in the summer time it is, of course, very largely increased.

Dr. George Gibson, J.P., Representative of the Donaghadee Urban District Council.

Extension is further borne out by the bi-weekly issue of special tickets from Donaghadee to Belfast recommended.

Suggested reduction in the cost of market tickets.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Dr. George Gilbey, J.P.,
Representative of the
Donaghadee Urban Sanitary
Committee.

Complaints as
to excessive
excursion
fares.

23037. Is it a seaside resort?—It is a seaside resort, only fourteen miles from Belfast. Our suggestion, also, in that case would be that the third-class market ticket should be reduced to 1s. 6d., instead of 1s. 8d., as at present, and that it should be granted by the 1.30 train also. That would allow the poorer class, who have to work, to be able to earn half a day's pay before going; if it were granted by the one o'clock train.

23038. Now, in addition to these special tickets—market tickets and ordinary tickets—are there any excursion tickets issued?—Well, we do not call them excursion tickets from Donaghadee, Mr. Chairman. Excursion tickets are practically unknown to us. The reductions from the ordinary tickets are trivial. The fares are, 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d., and 1s. 10d., and the ordinary fares, you see, are, 3s. 9d., 2s. 9d., and 2s. 8d. Should an excursion be given, such as to the Horse Show, which is a most important thing for farmers, and others, to visit and see the latest things in cattle, the fares may happen to be raised instead of lowered.

23039. Is that the Horse Show in Dublin?—In Belfast. Should that day happen to fall on a day on which special tickets are issued at fares of 2s. 6d., 2s., and 1s. 9d., they are raised instead of being still further lowered to encourage the people to go to Belfast. The fares are raised, they go up then. The 2s. 6d. fare goes up to 3s. 6d.; the 2s. goes up to 2s. 6d., and the 1s. 9d. up to 1s. 10d. That is the only excursion we have.

23040. But, I suppose they give an improved train service for it?—Oh, the train runs through at all times.

23041. Is it a special train?—No, it is an excursion by the same train, practically as the special fares are issued by.

23042. These increased fares are charged by the ordinary trains?—By the ordinary trains on the day that special fares are issued. You see we have got special fares on two days of the week—Monday and Wednesday. Those special fares are 2s. 6d., 2s., and 1s. 9d. Should the excursion to Belfast, to this show for instance, fall on a Wednesday, on which we have those special fares, they immediately put them up to 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d., and 1s. 10d., instead of further reducing them to encourage us to travel.

23043. Mr. Sexton—Whenever there happens to be a special attraction the excursion fare is raised?—When there is a special attraction it is raised.

23044. Mr. Telford—May I state that the manager of the company, who is here, distinctly denies that, and desires to hand in this statement showing that single fares are raised on those Horse Show days (Document handed to Chairman).—(Witness)—I myself have paid it several times.

Mr. Telford—The manager of the company, who is here, distinctly denies that they do raise the fares on those days.

23045. Chairman—Here is the statement (Document handed to witness).—Might I ask when did this come into force?

23046. Look at the date of it.

23047. Mr. Telford—It was in force in 1905 and 1906, and in previous years?—(Witness)—I have certainly paid the extra fare myself on a number of occasions. I am not perfectly certain at present whether it was to the Cattle Show. I believe it was to the Flower Show and to the Dog Show.

23048. Chairman—This is in reference to the Horse and Cattle Show. Now, you have a paragraph referring to house tickets. What do you mean by house tickets?—House tickets are issued by the County Down Railway Company to all builders of houses. To those who build houses at Donaghadee they issue tickets, first-class, for ten years, five tickets.

23049. Oh, yes, that is an advantage all round!—A very great advantage all round.

23050. You do not complain of that?—Oh, no, oh, certainly not; but this thing about house tickets has got in. But the subscription tickets are only issued first and second-class, and our idea would be, or at least we have asked the County Down Railway company to issue also third-class subscription tickets.

23051. The first and second-class are very low rates, see not they?—They are, but still you get a considerable number of people of the artisan class who could not pay second-class. If they had a still further reduced third-class subscription ticket it would certainly be an advantage.

23052. You think extending the subscription ticket to third-class would bring additional revenue to the company?—Additional population to Donaghadee and revenue to the company as well. We have over 200 houses in Donaghadee capable of accommodating this class of travellers that we have been agitating to get third-class subscription tickets for, and these people would undoubtedly come to live with us if they had cheap means of travelling in the district.

23053. Are you aware whether what you call a third-class house ticket is issued in England?—Yes.

23054. You know that?—Yes; I have been informed by parties that were in England that such is the case. I do not know it myself.

23055. My own impression—I am not speaking authoritatively—is that in England it is only first and second. But you do not know?—No.

23056. My recollection of it is that these particular tickets—what we call residential tickets—are confined to first and second-class in England; but what you say is that your circumstances are such that it would be a great advantage to the people you think and an advantage to the railway company if those tickets were extended to third-class?—Yes. I mean, of course, subscription tickets, tickets that are paid for, not the ordinary house tickets that are granted free by the railway company. I am not discussing at present the house ticket that is granted free to all new houses that are built within a certain radius. I am not discussing that ticket at all, but this third-class subscription ticket that we have been agitating for.

23057. A third-class season ticket?—Season ticket, 23058. Issued for a month?—Issued for a month.

23059. Or three months?—Or three months.

Mr. Telford—Might I hand you, sir, this statement of the companies who issue these free tickets, and of those who don't. (Document handed to Chairman).*

Mr. Sexton—Does it include the County Down Railway?

Mr. Telford—It includes all companies.

Chairman—The free tickets for residential districts are only issued in connection with houses of a certain value.

Mr. Telford—That is so.

Chairman—There is a value fixed?

Mr. Telford—There is a value fixed.

Chairman—The house must be of a certain value to claim one of these tickets.

Mr. Telford—Yes. And on the County Down Railway the house must be of £25 value for a first class ticket, and of £10 value for a second class ticket.

Chairman—According to this there is only one railway in England that issues them.

Mr. Telford—That is correct, that statement. I may say that that information, Sir Charles, is obtained after communication with each of the railway companies in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Ascroft—That no railway company in England issues free residential tickets, except one?

Mr. Telford—Yes.

Chairman—And my impression is that it was done away with some years ago. It used to be done on the North Western to a certain extent; but that was forty years ago. There is none of it in Ireland at any rate than anywhere else.

Mr. Telford—Yes.

23060. Chairman—What do you say about this?—I am not advocating the giving of a free residential third class ticket at all. I am advocating the granting of a third-class subscription ticket.

23061. For a term?—For a term.

23062. And at present they are first and second?—And at present they are first and second.

23063. And they have recently been extended in England to third class?—Yes. So I understand.

23064. And what you suggest is that it might be extended to third class?—Yes, with benefit to all.

23065. All round?—Yes.

23066. Now, with regard to the time of the trains between these places, have you any objection to that? How long does it take?—There was another little matter in regard to subscription tickets that, if you would permit me I should like to mention just now, and that is in regard to this subscription ticket—that is the ordinary subscription or monthly ticket—that provided the party in whose name the ticket is

* See Appendix No. 11.

Proposed
issue of third
class season
tickets.

Oct 14, 1907.

Dr George Gibson, J.P.,
Representative of the
Donaghadee Urban District
Council.

Donaghadee capable of
great develop-
ment if
properly
served by
railway.

The allegation
that the
County Down
Company
continually
increase the
passenger
fares from
Donaghadee.

that would do so much to assist in developing Donaghadee as a town starting at that time. I have not a doubt about it.

28159. Mr. Scroon.—Do you consider Donaghadee a strong town?—I do so.

28160. It is both a market town and a seaport town?—No; it is not a market town.

28161. But a seaport town?—A seaport town.

28162. And capable of being much developed?—Very much developed indeed, and, practically, there has been no attempt at developing it made, for so far as my knowledge, and as it is situated only fourteen miles from Belfast one would say that it was well worthy of being developed.

28163. You say that on special occasions fares are raised on excursion trains, and the manager hands in a paper to show that in 1906 there were return tickets at single fares from Donaghadee to Belfast for the horse show?—Will the manager say that such a thing never took place at any other excursion than the cattle show—that fares are not raised, as I say, from 2s. 6d. to 3s. and from 2s. to 2s. 6d.

28164. Mr. Telford.—If there is any such case where the County Down Railway Company have not given such cheap fares—because the manager says it does not exist?—(Witness.)—I have paid the excess fare on several occasions, over and above the special fare. I, myself, have paid it.

28165. Mr. Telford.—Might I say that if there were instances of the fare being raised they would be given. The manager says they do not exist?—(Witness.)—I have paid excess fares on several occasions for excursions over and above the special fare. I, myself, have paid it.

28166. Mr. Scroon.—On ordinary occasions of excursions you get this reduction; but when, as Mr. Telford says, there is some public event, or some occasion of special interest, the tendency is to raise the fare?—It is.

Mr. Telford.—It is absolutely denied; and no occasion has been instanced when it has been done.

Mr. Scroon.—The manager denies it?—

Chairman.—This is a distinct case—the one in the spring and the other in the summer; and in both cases—a horse and cattle show and a horse and sheep show—on both cases they gave single fares for the double journey.

28167. Mr. Scroon.—On the second occasion, the fares were about the ordinary, but included admission to the show. What would that be worth?—A shilling.

Well, then, the fares being 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d., and 2s. 3d., it would appear that the sum charged for the journey was 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., and 1s. 3d.

Mr. Telford.—That is single fare.

28168. Mr. Scroon.—You will admit that on these occasions special concessions were allowed?—Yes.

28169. But your impression and your memory is that on other occasions the fare was raised. We have evidence here in abundance that whilst market tickets are allowed throughout Ireland at reduced rates, when a fair happens to fall on the same day the low fare is raised. That would seem to indicate a tendency to act in the direction stated. The gist of your evidence, I take it, to be that—for your town the railway might pursue a policy which would lead to the development of the town?—Undoubtedly, I do not say it would pay from the start.

28170. It would, by-and-by?—By-and-by it would, undoubtedly; because the people will not come to live with an without a better service to come up and down to their business, and it is not possible to come and reside with us now; but in the very near future I have no doubt the train service would pay. At present the train service during the winter is very poor. We have a train at half-past seven from Belfast—7.30, 10.35, 3.35, 5.15, 6.30, and 7.45, and from Donaghadee 7.30, 8.30, 9.0, 10.15, 1.25, 3.15, 4.35, and 7.30. There is no train leaves Belfast between 10.35 and 3.30. If you miss the one you do not get another for four hours. To Bangor they have fourteen trains in the day, and we have only seven.

Mr. Telford.—That is not quite correct, because in three days of the week there is a train at 1.35, and during the summer it runs daily.

28171. Chairman.—He is speaking of the winter service?—And an occasional service two days in the week.

28172. Chairman.—It does not seem to me to be a bad service. Your opinion is that if there were more trains there would be more people?—Quite so.

28173. Mr. Scroon.—The difficulty is that private companies will not make concessions involving probable loss of revenue. If the manager wants to do it the directors object, and if the directors want it the shareholders stop them—I quite sympathize with them; and I think it is quite right of them to make dividends. I would not like to see them lose money, but I consider that it could be improved, and both parties make money.

28174. The way would be to substitute for a system in which private profit is the end, a system in which the public interest would have the first place.

Examined by Mr. A. WOLFE.

28175. The first words of your brief are that the fares are 2s. 6d., 2s. 3d., and 2s. Is that single or return?—Return.

28176. Chairman.—He told us it was return.

28177. Mr. A. Wolfe.—It is not in the proof. I was not in the room. Of course, Dr. Gibson, under normal circumstances, the return ticket, third-class, is at the rate of just over a halfpenny per mile?—We have no fault to find with that. It is the number of trains. We do not grumble at paying if we get the service.

28178. Let us talk about the service. What is the population of Donaghadee?—Over 2,000 in the winter, at present.

28179. 8,000 people; which means, say, 400 able-bodied adults?—That is the usual proportion.

28180. 400 able-bodied men, some of them would have to go to Belfast, and you have a train at 7.30, at 8.30, and at 9.01?—Yes.

28181. Do you think you ought to have more trains, or do you merely suggest that they would be more conveniently arranged?—I would say that we require an eight o'clock train, most decidedly—one which would suit employees. You must understand that we have not got any of these employees living with us at present, which we would have if we had the service.

28182. What I wanted to know was, having at present 400 men, some of whom might travel, do you think three trains in an hour and a half is as many as you ought to expect?—It is pretty good for the present.

28183. What you do think is that they might be arranged more conveniently. You want to get in a little before nine instead of one a good deal before, and another after?—Yes.

28184. Have you ever represented that to the management?—I have been speaking of it, but I cannot say that you can touch any of the trains at present except the nine, as far as Donaghadee is concerned; and I understand it is a competition at Coler, and cannot be moved.

28185. Just tell me what has been done. Who has moved?—I have appeared on a deputation before the County Down Railway Company on several occasions.

28186. From where?—From the Urban Council of Donaghadee.

28187. Organised by the Urban District Council, and they said they could not make it fit better?—No, not without changing the half-eight, and they could not afford to give an extra train.

28188. Could not afford to give an extra train, and they think 8.30 is the most convenient hour, and you do not?—Paradox me. I did not mean to touch the half-eight train at all, because it suits a large number in the summer time.

28189. You agree that you could not expect, reasonably, more trains?—It would not pay at present; but in the near future I hold it would pay.

28190. Then you do not want a fourth train?—We do want a fourth train.

28191. Which you say would not pay now, but would pay in the near future?—Yes, in the near future.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson P.C.

28192. I think I am right in saying, Dr. Gibson, that Donaghadee is a summer resort for all the business classes, also for the working people of Belfast?—Yes.

28193. Is fact, it is more popular than Bangor, if it had equal facilities?—Yes.

28194. At present these facilities are, in your opinion, wanting, and, to instance one occasion, you would have a considerable number of workmen living at Donaghadee, and returning morning and evening, if they were given facilities?—That is our opinion.

28194. Belgium is a place often quoted of a country where the fares are very low. I do not know whether you are aware that they give, in Belgium (the conditions are not the same, as it is much more populous than Ireland), but at any rate, you can go backwards and forwards a distance of twenty miles every day in the week for 1s. 6d., and in Belgium, apparently, the workmen travel to their every-day work distances up to sixty miles. But even apart from that, the Belgium Government gives a ticket—a return ticket—available for any day in the week, that is to say, a man goes on the Monday and comes back on Saturday evening, and he can do it for 9d. Even if you had anything approaching to that—in the workman's ticket available for the whole week, the 2s. ticket!—The ordinary return ticket!

28195. Is it available for a week or only for the day?—It is available for a month.

28196. But then, as you say, he pays 2s., and on leaving Donaghadee on Monday morning and returning on Saturday night he pays 2s.—Yes.

28197. In Belgium he could get that ticket for 9d.—I know something about Donaghadee. I was born there, as, perhaps, you are aware, but, at any rate, I know the way in which attempts have been made to develop the town, and I know there has been a great feeling—you will correct me if I am wrong—that Donaghadee has suffered at the expense of Bangor. Bangor is more conveniently situated with regard to Belfast, but the prospects of the place itself are not comparable with Donaghadee at all!—Not at all, in no way.

28198. I think, further, that the Belfast and Co. Down Railway—one has only to look at the railway returns to see that it is prosperous!—Yes.

28199. It carried about one-tenth of the total number of passengers carried by the Irish lines. It carries nearly half as many, or more than half what the Great Southern carries, and nearly half as many as the Great Northern, and nearly double what the Midland carries. Of course it is not all in Donaghadee direction, but Donaghadee forms an important element in the contribution, and I suppose your contention is that where it has such a large travelling public it would be in the interests of the railway and manifestly in the interests of the public, that greater encouragement should be given to the travelling public!—Undoubtedly. If you take it that twenty-five years ago they were only paying 1 per cent., and not giving any facilities, and now, when they are giving facilities, they are paying 6 per cent., any further facility to the public would increase the percentage.

28200. Although the population is only 2,000 in the

winter, I think in the summer it is half as much again!—More than half as much again. It would be 5,000 or 6,000.

28201. Then, if these facilities were given, in the course of time they would be the means of attracting a great many of the working classes to Donaghadee!—I cannot say. The facilities for travelling in the summer are pretty good.

28202. The workmen's facilities?—No. They are the same as at all other times.

28203. Workmen and their families would come down in large numbers to Donaghadee, and would be induced to remain permanently!—Yes, it is the permanent residents we are considering in our agitation for a better train service.

28204. Mr. Taylor—Just one word. I would like to tell you one fact about the 8.30 train from Donaghadee, which is due at 9.10. As a matter of fact, there was a deputation waited on the Co. Down Board with the object of getting the train altered to start at 8.30, as Dr. Gibson asked. As soon as the news of that fact was made public two memorials were received by the Directors, begging them not to make the alteration. The present time of the train was the most convenient, and they strongly objected to an alteration being made. Then the Co. Down Board wrote to the Urban Committee a letter, in which they said:—"In view of the fact that the visit of the deputation has resulted in the presentation of two memorials, largely signed, by the residents in Donaghadee and Newlands, who are daily travelling by this train, urging that an alteration shall take place in the hours of departure, namely, 8.30 a.m. and 9.0 a.m., my directors are satisfied that to make any change would cause widespread dissatisfaction, and they must, therefore, adhere to the present hours. In suggesting the change the Urban Council can hardly have been aware of the views of the generality of the daily travellers." The Co. Down Company were quite willing to make the alteration, but they found it was not generally wanted.

28205. Chairman (to Witness)—I suppose you are aware of that?—I know all about the memorial, and how it was got up. It was hawked round and signed by all sorts and descriptions of people in Donaghadee, but apart from that, I consider that our views were misrepresented by the Co. Down Railway Company. We advocated an 8 o'clock train, and we did not care how or where they got it. We wanted a train reaching Belfast in time for employees, and we asked them to find it. That was really our view. If we were taken up as asking them to move the half-eight it was a mistake. As far as I am concerned, I did not want it to be interfered with.

Oct. 18, 1907.

Dr. George Gibson, J.P.,
Representative of the
Donaghadee Urban District
Council.

An increase in the permanent residents of Donaghadee the object of the agitation for a better train service.

Proposed additional morning train from Donaghadee urged.

Mr. Robert Sloan,
Representative of the
Donaghadee Urban District
Council.

Unavailability of the present cattle train service from Belfast to Donaghadee.

MR. ROBERT SLOAN EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

28206. Mr. Robert Sloan, I think you appear on behalf of the same District Council as the last witness!—Yes.

28207. Are you a member of the Council?—I am.

28208. Are you engaged in business at this place?—In Donaghadee, I am a fisher and an auctioneer.

28209. What is a fisher?—A butcher.

28210. The last witness applied his evidence to the passenger service!—This passenger service.

28211. I think you rather wish to give your views upon the goods train arrangement!—Yes, sir, to a certain extent.

28212. It is no use going over the same ground!—No, sir.

28213. Do you agree with what the previous witness said?—I do, thoroughly.

28214. Then we will take it, and leave that question altogether. With regard to the merchandise traffic—this live stock traffic and other things—do you consider the existing rates are fair and reasonable?—We consider they are rather high.

28215. For what?—For cattle and for trading stuffs. For instance, on the cattle brought down from Belfast—to bring eight or ten cattle we are charged 12s., and we consider that rather high for eight large beasts or ten small beasts, and 6s. is the price of half a wagon, and if two cows down 5s. 6d. is charged for one beast, that is when bringing down two beasts you might as well take half a wagon. We consider that rather too high.

28216. It is practically the same proportion as adopted all over Ireland?—I suppose it is. There are some complaints as to the prices.

28217. Oh, yes, we have had evidence on the subject. If you take a full truck load!—It is 12s., but it is seldom full truck loads come down, and when they do we are charged 12s.

28218. You do not object to that?—I cannot say I object very much to it. Of course I would like it cheaper, if possible.

28219. Everybody would. Is the time convenient? The time is inconvenient, sir. The cattle must be shipped at the time when the market is really at its best, at a very great inconvenience to the purchaser.

28220. One minute. I am dealing with cattle coming into the town!—Yes.

28221. Where do they come from?—From Belfast, usually. It is the principal market town; in fact, where cattle are bought and sold.

28222. The butchers in your town get their supplies of live stock from Belfast?—From Belfast principally.

28223. Have you any complaints or suggestions with reference to the way in which the cattle are conveyed from Belfast to your town?—Only the time of the train, only the train service.

28224. What time does the train leave?—About 1.30, I think, each day.

28225. Mid-day?—Yes, mid-day.

28226. Your statement is that 1.25 is inconvenient?—A most inconvenient time, we consider.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. Robert Sloan,
Representative of the
Donaghadee Urban District
Council.

Complaint as to excessive
rate for building
materials from Belfast
to Donaghadee.

23227. I thought cattle markets were always early in the morning?—The best of the market is generally twelve o'clock in the day—from 11 to 12.

23228. You think 1.36 is too early?—Rather early.

23229. And that it would be an advantage to your district and to you if the cattle were allowed to travel by a later train?—By a later train.

23230. We will leave it in there. What about feeding stuffs, grain, minerals, and building materials? First of all, do you know anything about the rates?—Only what I have heard and gathered from different sources.

23231. Have you any figures before you?—I have here some figures that I sent in myself.

23232. I have not got them. What are they?—“Building materials.”

23233. What do you mean by building materials?—Timber, slates, cement. Of course brick and lime is a local industry. We manufacture brick in Donaghadee, and get lime in Ballygar, but sometimes it comes over the Co. Down Railway, but on the other hand, building material must come that way.

23234. Principally timber?—Timber, slates, cement, etc. It is considered that these rates are unequal. For instance, they are charged something like 2s. to Newtownards per ton, and the same ton coming to Donaghadee would cost 4s. We think that is a hardship, seeing it is only about eight miles. I thought it was not so far; I thought it was only six, but the general manager says it is eight miles—eight miles from Newtownards. It costs 2s. to Newtownards, and six miles farther on, to Donaghadee, it is 4s., and we think it is rather a hardship to charge a double rate for leaving the same ton at Donaghadee as at Newtownards.

23235. Mr. Telford.—May I ask what that rate is for? It does not seem accurate?—For cement, or anything of that sort—slates, or anything of that sort.

23236. The rate for slates is 2s. 6d., in six ton lots, 2s. 3d. in four ton lots?—For four ton loads there is something I have got to say. For instance, four ton is put in, and it is charged 2s. 6d. a ton, and anything in excess is charged 4s.

23237. Chairman.—Not in excess?—Anything above five ton would be charged 4s., and anything under five ton.

Mr. Telford.—It is not correct. The rate is 2s. 6d. for six ton lots, and 2s. 3d. for four ton lots. If you send five tons it would be at the four ton lot 2s. 3d., unless that gentleman has proof to the contrary.

23238. Chairman.—We still have it right in the notes, because I am sure what Mr. Sloan (constitutionally, for he is speaking on information received, and he said very fairly he did not know it of his own knowledge), has given us is not in accordance with the actual state of things?—As far as I know, and I have gathered it.

23239. I think you need not dwell upon it. What you do say is correct—that to Newtownards the rate is 2s., and for eight miles further it is double?—The rate is double.

23240. Is there any dispute about that, Mr. Telford?

Mr. Telford.—I speak with a little knowledge of Co. Down, because I managed that line for five and a half years, and I would say it is not correct. It is not the Newtownards rate. There is one thing—that the Newtownards rate is specially low, because it is 13½ miles by rail and 8 miles by road, and you have got the road competition to contend with.

23241. Chairman.—Is there any fishing in this place?—There is.

23242. And fish is sent from there?—From Donaghadee, consigned to Belfast.

23243. Have you anything to say about that?—Yes, I have a little. I would wish to compare another local industry that our poor people work at, and that is gathering dulse. I do not know whether you know what I mean.

23244. I do not know.

23244. Mr. Benton.—It is called dulse in the South of Ireland.

23244a. Colonel Fox.—It is a seaweed?—That is gathered and sent to the market. Our poor people gather that, to a great extent, in the summer months—our boatmen and the local people. They have to take boats to the outlying rocks to gather it, and I consider that the railway company charge too much for it in this way, that they must travel with it. The railway company won't take any responsibility, and the poor people must pay a return fare, travelling with the

dulse, and fish is carried by the same train at 1s. a box.

23245. Where to?—To Belfast.

23246. Do you mean that it is sent to Belfast for consumption?—It is for public consumption.

23247. Chairman.—You have not told us what the rate is?—It costs, I think, 1s. 10d. a cwt. for the first cwt., and any additional portion of a cwt. 2s.

23248. That is by passenger train?—By passenger train.

23249. Why do they not send it by goods train?—It is a perishable article, and they won't take any responsibility, and, therefore, they must travel with it.

Mr. Telford.—As a matter of fact, it goes by goods train. There was 18 ton 15 cwt. in the year by goods train, and 12 cwt. by passenger train, and the goods train rate is 10s. a ton.

23250. Chairman.—That is 5d. per cwt.?—(Witness.)—That is quite a different story from what the gentleman told me, because I have this from themselves.

Mr. Telford.—I have the figures.

23250a. Chairman.—Those figures cannot be disputed. The bulk of it is carried by goods train. That is what I thought. The rate is 6d. per cwt., instead of 1s. 6d. and 1s. 10d.

23251. Mr. Telford.—By passenger train it is 11d. per cwt. with a minimum charge of 6d. 1—I think there is some mistake.

Mr. Telford.—It is charged at half ordinary parcels rate.

23252. Chairman.—That seems fair and reasonable?—It would be fair and reasonable.

23253. Did you hear Dr. Gibson's evidence with regard to the view of your Council on the nationalisation of the railways?—I did.

23254a. Do you agree with what he said?—I do.

23254. I won't ask another question.

23254a. Colonel Fox.—I do not ask anything.

23255. Mr. Stewart.—I do not ask any questions.

Examined by Mr. SEATON.

23255a. After the departure of this one five stock train from Belfast, at one o'clock or so in the afternoon, any further cattle from that fair to Donaghadee have to be driven by road?—Yes, sir, or put up till the following day.

23256. Or else driven by road?—Or else driven by road.

23257. I understand you to say that the best time of the market, both for the butchers and farmers, is about twelve?—Always; the market is at its best then.

23258. The farmer is more likely to sell and the butcher more likely to make a satisfactory purchase?—Yes.

23259. So that the train leaves before the height of the market?—It does. That is the opinion.

23260. And then cattle brought for Donaghadee—are they really driven twenty-one miles by road?—Usually put up for the night.

23261. Sometimes driven?—Sometimes driven; but it is bad for them.

23262. They are put up for the night, and the cost of putting them up is due to this?—Yes; and sheep and lambs the same; but latterly the County Down Railway Company has met us on different occasions, and brought them down by a later train—I must say that.

23263. Do you think a later train could be fixed so as to suit all interested—the butcher and farmer, and all concerned—without dislocating the railway service?—Yes; because in the winter time this train, at a quarter past three, brings the cattle on, and in summer they cannot. I wonder there is such a difference. In summer it brings them one time and in winter another.

23264. Have you asked why they could not give a train later?—I have been told the Board of Works would not allow them.

23265. What has the Board of Works to do with it?—I do not know.

23266. Chairman.—The Board of Agriculture?—I do not think so. It is some authority that has bled them to do it—the Board of Trade.

23267. On what grounds?—I could not say.

23268. Mr. Telford. The real fact is this: the cattle is taken by the 1.25 at goods train rate; if any cattle do not catch that train they are taken by the 3.25 passenger at goods train rate; and there is need for

The Belfast
and New-
townards rate
compared.

Complaint as to rate for
dulse (sea-
weed) from
Donaghadee
to Belfast

them to walk I—I have been doing getting them down by that train often, but not lately.

28269. Mr. Sexton.—What is that?—Demad. Not lately.

28270. Mr. Acworth.—When was that consignment made, Mr. Tatlow—allowing them to go by the 220 train?

Mr. Tatlow.—As long as I can remember.

28271. Mr. Sexton.—You are in the trade?—I am in the trade for a long time, and I have had to put them up and keep them till the following day on account of not getting them away, but lately I have been able to get them.

28272. If the 330 had been available you would not have had to put them up?—On different occasions I have been obliged to.

28273. Mr. Tatlow.—Might I ask on what date it has been refused.—Mr. Sloan's traffic for the year 1906 was four wagons?—(Witness).—It would be very much larger if we had a train to suit. I got the most of my supplies down from Belfast—or, at least, would get, and more than I—

28274. Mr. Sexton.—About the cattle rate—the comparison of the full wagon rate with the rate for parts of a wagon, what do you say—what do you wish to see done?—Not very much. I do not think there is very much to be said, only some complaint that they would like to have them cheaper, and I suppose so would we all. I have not much to say about the rates for that trade.

28275. If the full wagon rate be 13s., do you think 5s. 6d. is too much for two?—The head rate is too much, being 3s. 6d. each.

28276. You think that the rate for the smaller number of beasts should bear some closer approximation than it does—that the proportion per head should be nearer to the full wagon rate?—Yes.

28277. Should the same person have six or seven tons of coal in the same wagon the extra ton would be charged at 4s. per ton?—For ton—that is, for under five tons.

28278. For under five tons?—I have heard that. I have only gathered that from outsiders.

28279. You are not able to say?

28280. Mr. Tatlow.—That is distinctly wrong?—(Witness).—There seems to be some truth in it.

28281. Mr. Sexton.—If you carry five tons for the special rate it is obvious that for the number of tons over five the rate will not be increased?—I got that from a gentleman on our district. I do not think he would tell me an untruth.

28282. There were two merchants, and it may be they misook them for two lots?—Yes, it might.

28283. Then, extra would be charged?—Was charged.

Mr. Acworth.—If they came with two consignments, and sent them together, they would be charged.

Mr. Tatlow.—If it is one consignee or one consignee, then it is charged at the rate for the total quantity.

28284. Mr. Acworth.—Do you allow a six-ton rate to consignments, made to one consignee, by three consignees?

Mr. Tatlow.—It must be one at either end, one consignee, or one consignee. It may may be three consignees to one consignee, or one consignee to three consignees.

Mr. Sexton.—This was a case of one consignee, I think, consigning to himself. And he got from more than one merchant, and my suggestion was that if these lots arrived at different times they might be taken to be different lots.

Mr. Tatlow.—If they arrived at different times they would be different consignments, as a matter of fact.

28285. Mr. Sexton.—Is any explanation given, Mr. Sloan, of the difference between the rate for timber and such things from Belfast to Newtownards—2s. a ton, and to Donaghadee, six miles further on, 4s. 1s. There is no doubt about that, the builders do complain that the rates are rather high in comparison with the rate to Newtownards, and it is greatly against the building trade of Donaghadee. It is a little town that has begun to rise, it only wants the railway company to help it, and we want them to give us as many facilities as is possible.

28286. 2s. for fourteen miles, 4s. for twenty-one miles?

Mr. Tatlow.—No, sir; it is 2s. 6d.

28287. Mr. Sexton.—He says 2s. for fourteen miles and 4s. for twenty-two miles?—(Witness).—Yes.

28288. And the disproportion is too great?

Mr. Tatlow.—The explanation is the very short distance from Belfast, and if you do not have low rates it would go by road.

28289. Mr. Sexton.—Competition?

Mr. Tatlow.—Certainly.

Witness.—We are in a bad position for competition, we are out of the way a little bit and we are put around by the railway company. As Mr. Gibson said, we are only fourteen miles from Belfast, and the natural way would be through Bangor, and we are put around by Coober.

28290. You think the difference should not be so heavy?—I do.

28291. That case of castings from Falkirk has not been mentioned. It was a consignment weighing one ton five cwt. 1s.—Yes.

28292. How did it come?—It came to a gentleman in Donaghadee.

28293. By what route?—By the Glasgow route, or Anderson.

28294. How far by rail in Scotland?—Falkirk.—The distance from Falkirk to Glasgow, I believe it was Glasgow. I do not know the distance myself, I do not think it is very far.

28295. It is said to be twenty-five miles. One ton five cwt. rail to Glasgow and carried by sea to Belfast, and rail to Donaghadee, cost 51 3s., made up as follows.—4s. to Belfast Quay, 2s. harbour dues, and 12s. from Belfast to Donaghadee?—That was the County Down Railway charge to Donaghadee, and I just wish to compare the different rates.

28296. There was more rail in Scotland than in Ireland apparently, and while the Scotch railway rate and shipping rate cost 8s., the shorter rail in Ireland cost 15s.—That is so, sir; that can be proven, that is correct.

28297. Mr. Tatlow.—Will you kindly give the dates and we will inquire?—I could not give the dates.

28298. If there is a consignment, an actual consignment, I would like particulars?—I have not particulars at present, but I can get them.

28299. Chairman.—You have no particulars?—I have no particulars, only the figures.

28300. How did you get the figures; are they in the proof?—They are, and I got them from the party.

Mr. Tatlow.—I asked them to be given, because if there was a specific charge I would like to look into it.

28301. Chairman.—The 2s. must be from Glasgow

28302. Mr. Sexton.—Can you say whether it was from Falkirk?—The castings came from Falkirk.

28303. This was really a case of castings costing 22s. 1s.—That is what it cost.

Mr. Tatlow.—As a matter of fact, there is no 12s. rate in the rate-book to Donaghadee; we ought to get particulars.

28304. Mr. Sexton.—The gentleman who gave the statement might have them.

28305. Mr. Acworth.—You might give the name?—Mr. McIlroy, of Donaghadee.

Mr. Tatlow.—That will do; we can get it now.

28306. Mr. Acworth.—Do you know when it happened?—I do not know, Mr. James McIlroy, Donaghadee, would know.

28307. Mr. Sexton.—Just a word about the trade in distill. The selling value is 3s. to 4s. a cwt. in Belfast?—Yes. I have only gathered that, Mr. Sexton.

28308. You say that the highest selling value is 3s. to 4s.—I have been told so.

28309. You say that it is gathered in small lots, very small lots?—Very small lots; I have seen them going with it. I have not seen any going by goods. It is in small bags.

28310. It costs 1s. 10d. a cwt. for carriage?—So I was told.

28311. That is to say, from a quarter to half the selling value of it?—Yes.

28312. Whilst a cwt. of fish is carried for a shilling, and a cwt. of sewed arabin for a shilling?—Yes.

28313. You think the cost of carrying the distill should bear a lower proportion to the value of the article?—Yes.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. Robert Sloan,
Representative of the
Donaghadee
Urban District
Council.

Completed re-
currence rate
on a consig-
ment of
castings of
Falkirk.

See Appendix,
No. 14.

The rates for
distill out of
proportion to
the value

Mr. JOSEPH A. GLENN, B.A., J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Oct. 14 1907.

Mr. Joseph A. Glenn, B.A., J.P., Representative of the Galway County Council and the County Councils General Council.

General dissatisfaction in Galway and Mayo with the present railway rates and facilities.

People's relief obtained from the Government of U.S. and W. and L. Railways not realised.

28311. You are Chairman of the Galway County Council?—Yes.

28312. And also a member of the County Councils General Council?—Yes.

28313. Is that capacity you are acquainted with the resolution that was adopted by the General Council?—Yes.

28314. It is dated 18th October, 1906, and we have it on the notes already. You sent it forward in your proof?—Yes.

28315. Have you had any means of ascertaining information as to the working of Irish railways?—Well, I had particular means some few years ago at the time of the amalgamation of the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company with the Great Southern and Western. At that time I acted in the County Galway on behalf of the Midland Company, and I had to visit all the towns in the County Galway and some in Mayo. And the result of my travelling all over the county was to find that there was widespread dissatisfaction against both companies by all the farmers, traders, and gentlemen in that district. The traders complained of the cross-Channels rates as against the rates for produce, including wool, and all people complained of the high travelling rates, that is the passenger rates to Dublin and elsewhere. The result was that my work was exceedingly difficult, because the Midland Company, being the local company, most prejudicial, of course, was against it, and most people expected that when the Waterford and Limerick Railway was abolished and the Great Southern came in we would find the millennium of Irish railways in the West. It is the very opposite. The Great Southern is now intensely unpopular around about Tuam and district, and people complain that matters are worse than ever. And the Tuam people complain that the facilities under the old system, when the Midland worked in harmony with the Waterford and Limerick, have disappeared and there is constant friction between the two companies now.

28316. In the course of your inquiries did you find any complaints as to the export and import rates?—I did.

28317. Take first the rates of exports from Ireland to England—what was the complaint there?—One gentleman in Ballinasloe, he is dead now, a Mr. Horan, told me that he used to send his wool from Ballinasloe to Athlone and back it from Athlone back through Ballinasloe to Bradford at a cheaper rate than he would book it direct from Ballinasloe to Bradford direct. And the only explanation was that at Athlone there was competition between the two companies and also it was brought nearer to the ports.

28318. Independent of that particular instance, were there any general complaints about the exports?—Not so much about the exports. It was the imports. Several traders complained that they had to pay a great deal more to get the same class of goods from Dublin than they had to get them from England. And one particular instance I saw in a list that I got yesterday was that actually the rate for bacon from Dublin to Tuam is higher than the rate from Liverpool to Tuam by 6s. or 7s. at the present moment. Tuam is sixteen miles from the sea.

28319. You said, I think, that you had got the figures there, and I would like to get this on the notes. Give us the figures of the rate for bacon from Liverpool to Tuam, the through rates?—17s. 11d.

28320. And the rate from Dublin?—35s. 3d.

28321. But I suppose there would be no bacon coming from Dublin to Tuam?—I don't know. That was given to me last night, made out by a merchant in Tuam.

28322. Though the figures read that way on paper, there is no particular grievance there, is there? I would have thought that bacon would rather have gone from Tuam to Dublin?—Oh, no, American bacon.

28323. This is American bacon?—Yes.

28324. Coming from Liverpool to the country?—Yes. It is actually less.

28325. But there is no bacon coming from Dublin to inland places in Ireland?—There would be. They

had a bacon factory in Dublin until very recently, and we had actually Irish bacon coming from Dublin. That factory, I think, is still working, but purchased up by Messrs. O'Meara.

28326. Do you think that that arrangement of low import rates from England as compared with the export rates from Ireland is an advantage to Ireland or a disadvantage to Ireland?—I like low import rates by all means, but I think we should get corresponding reductions in the Irish rates. They hamper Irish industries.

28327. You think that the local rates in Ireland should bear some proportion to the portion of the through rate that the Irish railways get out of the traffic?—Yes, that is my idea.

28328. Do you not suggest that it should be the same?—No. I think there is too great a disparity at present between the two rates.

28329. Did you find any particular grievances in your inquiries with reference to passenger fares?—Yes. We consider—whether rightly or wrongly—that, for instance, as between second and third class fares there is too great a disparity altogether. I myself was paying for a season ticket from Tuam to Gort, where I had an office, and 250s. was the rate. As I then travelled three times a fortnight second class, I saved on it. But when it was reduced to once a week I found that I could not work the ticket. Then they refused to give me the ordinary weekly ticket, which, of course, I did not grumble at. But I ended by travelling third class, and I save 27s. a year, taking one ticket a week between Tuam and Gort, twenty-eight Irish miles.

28330. Do you agree that there is too great a difference between the second and third class?—Yes.

28331. You say nothing about the first?—I never travel first unless some one else pays my expenses.

28332. You are aware of the general system in English lines as to second class fares?—I am not aware of my own knowledge. I have heard that there is only a very slight difference on most of the railways.

28333. But you think that with the difference between the two fares, say, anything approaching 50 per cent., instead of 60, the probability is that many people who now travel third would travel second and the railway companies benefit?—That is my opinion.

28334. As to the County Galway, have you any guaranteed lines there?—Yes, from Athlone to Loughrea.

28335. Is that worked to the satisfaction of the district?—No. The County Galway, or at least the baronies that pay it, are paying over £1,600 a year to pay the difference. £1,648 4s. is the exact amount of our rates for the past year.

28336. What does it work per rate per pound?—I just took it from our year book. I do not know the exact balance, but if put over the whole County Galway—

28337. Is it levied on the whole county?—No; I say it is nearly equal to a penny in the pound over the whole county. A penny in the pound would yield about £1,600 for the whole county, and this was only for two or three baronies round Loughrea.

28338. Is that amount decreasing or increasing?—It is practically stationary, I think. My recollection is that for some years past it has been nearly 2300 every half year.

28339. How is the railway worked?—It is beneath contempt, the working of it. It is the laughing stock of the whole country. It is about nine miles long and a donkey and will go as fast as the train.

28340. Colonel Hutchinson, P.O.—The witness is under some misapprehension, for the amount paid by the barony is £953 for each of the half years. The full amount of the guarantee is £1,600, and all the baronies have been called upon to pay is just half that.

28341. Mr. Toffin.—They have the advantage of the line being worked on 50 per cent. of the receipts. We work it at a great loss.

28342. Lord-Colonel Hutchinson, P.O.—You are not taking into account what the Treasury pay—8 per cent.—(Witness).—I may not have taken that.

28343. The County Council get it back afterwards; they get it back up to two per cent.—That is so. I took the figures from our own Council's year book, 1890 was in my hand, but I thought it was half-yearly. But I am not surprised their working it at 50 per cent. of the cost, because, as a matter of fact, everyone complains of the way that little railway is worked. In addition to that, our chief complaint as to that is we have absolutely no control. We are paying £800 a year for that railway, and the County Council has not a vote in the matter. There was, and I believe there is, a borough director appointed by the Grand Jury, but I think, in a case like that, there should be a direct representation from the County Council on the Board. There are three arbitrators, one of whom is the county surveyor for the East Riding, and all that these gentlemen have to do, as far as I can ascertain—the three arbitrators—are to simply certify that the accounts are correct. They have no power to go into the working of the line or anything save to certify that the accounts submitted agree with the vouchers, just like any ordinary auditor.

28344. *Chairman*.—The line is worked by the Midland Great Western?—Yes.

28345. At a percentage of their receipts?—I don't know.

Mr. Telford.—It is 55.

28346. *Chairman*.—Surely there is some means of some one of these three arbitrators examining into the accounts of the Midland Great Western, to see that the proportion accruing to the particular line is correct.

Mr. Telford.—I may say that the Board of Works look after that pretty closely. We have had them representing, in connection with these things, as to the proper proportion of the receipts. The Secretary of the Commission could tell you all about it.

Witness.—The Secretary of the County Council cannot tell us anything about it.

28347. *Colonel Hutchinson*.—The accounts are submitted to the County Council?—(Witness).—The accounts are submitted; but there is no one submitting railway accounts to a County Council man, because they do not understand railway accounts, and what we want is authority to put an expert there every year to audit these accounts on our behalf.

28348. *Chairman*.—When would you put them?—To have them nominated by the County Council.

28349. To sit on the Midland Board?—Oh, certainly not, but to have power to audit the accounts.

28350. *Colonel Hutchinson*.—The County Surveyor examines that report.

Witness.—But I do not regard him as an auditor; he has to examine the roads and bridges and all that kind of work. We want a professional accountant.

28351. *Chairman*.—Is there any reason why an accountant should not examine them?

Mr. Croker-Berridge, *Solicitor*.—It is the ordinary case provided under an Order in Council, the directors nominating one, an expert; and then there is the County Surveyor and one other. I dare say we can get that Order in Council. It confirms the bargain come to at the time.

Witness.—There is one gentleman, the Sub-Sheriff of Mayo, lives 100 miles away from the railway. There are three of them.

Mr. George Shanahan, *Secretary*.—The three arbitrators are appointed by the Board of Trade and not by the Board of Works. One of them must be the county surveyor under the Tramways Act of 1863.

28352. *Chairman*.—At any rate is your grievance, and you have explained quite sufficiently what your ideas are. Now, let us come to the general question. You are of opinion that the present system of managing railways is detrimental to the interest of the country?—I am.

28353. And you are in favour that the management should be in the hands of an authority in Ireland?—Yes, sir.

28354. And not a British authority?—Yes, that is so.

28355. And you agree that it would be an advantage that the whole Irish railways should be under one management, subject to this Irish authority?—Yes, sir.

28356. Have you considered how the money was to be raised to purchase the railways?—I think, of course, in the present state of the money market it

would not be very easy to find any capital, but considering the amount of security that the present shareholders will get they should be willing to convert their present holdings into guaranteed stock.

28357. Into a security that might be raised?—Yes.

28358. Guaranteed by Ireland or by Great Britain and Ireland?—You can guarantee by Ireland alone, in my opinion.

28359. You think so?—I do. There was one point that I wish to mention, and that is the inconvenience at present caused by the way in which the Midland fails to keep time at Athlery with their late train. That was a matter I was asked to bring up. They have changed the starting of the 4.30 train to 4.15, and it stops, I understand, at all the stations down the line, and the traffic is so congested that it is a common thing now for it to be two or three times a week to miss the connection with the train at Athlery. The Great Southern cannot wait for twenty minutes or half an hour, and sometimes that train comes in to Tralee at ten o'clock or a quarter to ten, and sometimes misses altogether the connection. The train is due at 9.15, and it is all due to the fact that the Midland have taken off the 3.30 train from Mullingar.

Mr. Telford.—You have a letter from us about that sent by our secretary. It is to the effect that the connection has been missed sometimes recently, chiefly due to the heavy traffic of the Dublin Exhibition, the Great Southern waited some time. The train was only altered for October, so we have had only a fortnight of it. Inquiry came from the Commissioners about it, and I think the connection will now be maintained.

Witness.—We do not at all approve of a train that has to run to Westport and Sligo and Galway, stopping at every petty station from Dublin to Mullingar. The other train was fairly comfortable. It left at ten minutes to two and reached us at a reasonable time.

Mr. Telford.—The train during the winter months stops at the stations between Dublin and Mullingar, whereas it does not in summer. It therefore leaves at 4.15 in the winter. But it is due at Mullingar at the same time, and for all stations west on the line it is the same time as in summer.

28360. *Chairman*.—Well, we have heard the statement now.

Examined by Mr. SELLORS.

28361. Do you think there is any adequate reason why there should be so many delays and failures to meet at the junctions of these great companies?—No. Some say that they have not enough of a staff at the stations. That is one of the reasons given, that they delay too long at all these petty stations.

28362. A sorted system of railways with time-tables emanating from one source and not from conflicting sources would be most likely to minimize that evil?—Yes.

28363. I should like to get to the bottom of the Loughrea and Attymore business. That line was constructed under the Act of 1853 on guaranteed capital, and it was handed over to the Midland Railway to be worked by them on 25 per cent. of the receipts?—Yes.

28364. And you say you want an auditor nominated by the County Council. Do you mean you wish to ascertain that the gross receipts are fully credited and that the expenses are not overestimated?—Yes.

28365. That is, you should have an agent of your own to satisfy you that the balance of receipts left over by the Midland Company is the true balance available?—Yes, that is my point exactly.

28366. And you say that, as contributors, you are entitled to that supervision?—Yes; we claim it. It is stated, I do not know what truth, that the Midland draws a great amount of sand on the railway, and that no credit is given for the cost and haulage of the sand to the Midland Railway itself. That is the statement as made to me by the County Councillor for the district.

28367. It is an instance which you give in proof of the necessity for an independent audit by those who have to pay.

Mr. Croker-Berridge, *Solicitor*.—The provisions of this order have just been handed to me. As to the auditing of the accounts, it provides the Order in Council under which the line was made in 1859, that

Oct. 14, 1867.

Mr. Joseph A. O'Connell, M.A.,

Representative of the

County Council,

and the

County Council's

General Council.

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Oct. 16, 1907.

Mr. Joseph A. Gilpin, B.A.,
J.R.

Representative
of the
Galway
County
Council,
and the
County
Council
General
Council

The appoint-
ment of
arbitrators

The powers
of inquiry
conferred on
the Board of
Works by the
Railways
(Ireland)
Act of 1896

The present
competition
between the
railways
valued in the
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traders

The increased
working
expenses
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the Grand Jury—which would be now the County Council—are, from time to time, to appoint a fit and proper person for the purpose of auditing the accounts. It is apparently altogether in their hands.

Witness—I was told all along when this thing was before the County Council during the last couple of years, that the Board of Trade appointed the Arbitrators. And we had no vote at all in the matter.

Mr. Charles Harrington, Solicitor.—That is, I am sure, more usually the case, but in this case it is entirely in the hands of the County Council, and there is a special provision giving the County Surveyor power as to the work.

23361a, Chairman.—Then they have a double protection.

Witness.—It is very useful. We may avail ourselves of it.

23362, Mr. Barton.—We have heard from Mr. Shanahan that the Board of Trade appoints the three arbitrators, one of whom must be the County Surveyor.

Witness.—I object to the County Surveyor.

23363a, Mr. Sedon.—When doctors differ how can you decide? I don't know. I object to the County Surveyor. They get free passes all over Ireland from the railway company.

Mr. Smyth (G.A.W.A.).—They do not.

Witness.—They certainly do in the West of Ireland.

23365, Mr. Barton.—Well, if you had the power you would use it?—Yes.

Mr. Charles Harrington, Solicitor.—Under the Railways (Ireland) Act of 1896 it is provided:—“Where any railway constructed under the previous Acts or this Act is aided by any money provided by Parliament the Board of Works may at any time appoint an engineer, or other fit person, to report on the condition, working, maintenance, or development, etc.” That is a general provision in addition to the other two given. So that they could go to the Board of Works.

23365a, Colonel Mahoness P.C.—It would not apply to the accounts.

23366, Mr. Barton (to Witness).—You say that the auditors are merely ministerial?—Yes.

23367, They see whether the accounts are properly abstracted from the books?—Yes.

23368, And not whether the whole receipts are given, or whether the expenses are put too high?—Exactly.

23369, About amalgamation, which is favoured by some witnesses—amalgamation in private hands—I understand you to say that before the great amalgamation of the Great Southern and Western and the Waterford and Limerick lines, the Midland was the most unpopular railway in that district?—Yes.

23368, And, in consequence of the amalgamation, the Great Southern has succeeded to that place?—Yes.

23369, Now, as to the question of competition, is there any real competition at present that does the public any good?—We have no real competition in Tuam. If the traders got their goods over the Midland to Tuam they are blocked at Athlone by the Great Southern, who won't allow the Midland goods into Tuam until evening. Again, when the Midland goods do arrive at Tuam they are brought to the loading back too late to be removed that evening by the traders, so that it usually happens that the Midland goods are delayed a day by the Great Southern at Tuam.

23370, There is really competition between land and sea carriage?—Yes. But that would remain under a State system?—Yes, certainly.

23371, And, so far as the longer and shorter route is concerned, the shorter route now rules the rate, and I put it to you whether the difference is not that, that under the private system goods are consigned for, and the traffic is broken up into meagre consignments, carried by small and costly teams, by inconvenient, circuitous routes increasing the working expenses?—That is so undoubtedly.

23372, Is not that all against the public interest?—Yes.

23373, It operates against reduction of the rates?—Yes; that would apply exactly to our case, because there are different trains bringing the goods at present, some by Limerick Junction and the other by the Midland, whereas one direct goods train would bring them all.

23374, The traffic is meagre—the working expenses

high, and the margin narrow, whereas, under a unified system, I presume the traffic would be sent by the shortest, cheapest, and most convenient route?—Exactly.

23375, And the result would be to cut down the working expenses and increase the marginal profit?—Yes.

23376, Do you see anything in the suggestion that there is competition in the case of private systems that would disappear if you had a public system. Do you see any point in it?—No. I consider, and I have considered for years, that the only solution in Ireland is ownership by one unitary system owned by the public.

23377, Which would send the traffic by the most convenient routes, and apply the surplus in the reduction of the rates?—Yes. I saw some statements as to having two or three big companies all over Ireland. In my opinion, that would make the matter even worse than at present.

23378, I want you to define, as briefly as you can, the bad effect of the present system. What is the effect on the export trade of Ireland of the present relation between the Irish export rates and the import rates on food supplies to England from abroad?—Every facility, as far as I can see, is given to the foreigner to dump his stuff into us.

23379, We know that for the last twenty-five years consignments from Denmark and other countries to Great Britain have been vastly on the increase!—Exactly, because they have got facilities in the interior of their own country to send their stuff out cheaply.

23380, And low rates into England?—Low rates into England. With us it is the opposite way about. There are no facilities for the people all over Ireland to send their goods at low outside rates, and by the quickest route to the English market.

23381, Besides our export rates are higher?—They are higher.

23382, Is that a fault inherent in the present system of railways; do you think that the British railways will move to give facilities at low rates, to those who have the control of this highly organised Continental traffic? The English railways will do what will bring the most traffic to themselves.

23383, And so they will continue to develop the Continental and foreign traffic?—Undoubtedly.

23383a, You see no defence for Ireland against that course, except the reduction of the export rates from Ireland?—No, sir, as far as I can see.

23384, Can that be got by the voluntary act of the railways, or by compulsory law, or in any way except by the creation of an authority to own the lines and reduce the rates?—No. I think you must get an authority that will be able to reduce those rates in the way you mentioned.

23385, The evil is a fundamental evil, and appears inseparable from the commercial working of the Irish railways?—It is, as far as I can judge.

23386, The English railways also have an interest in stimulating traffic from the interior of England into the interior of Ireland by low import rates into this country?—Yes.

23387, Do you consider that the English railways dominate the Irish railways?—It is the general belief, and it is my belief.

23388, That the twelve hundred millions of capital dominate the forty millions?—Certainly.

23389, And you think that it is likely to continue?—It will continue if things are managed as they are at present.

23390, And the policy of the British railways will continue to be development of traffic from England into Ireland by low rates into this country?—Undoubtedly.

23391, Then the Irish railways, you would say, having to yield to the British in that respect, are driven to make up their dividends by high inland rates?—That I believe to be the exact fact. In Ireland they are unable to reduce the rates because they give such facilities to the English imports.

23392, And that suppresses Irish manufactures, and stimulates the import of goods?—Yes.

23393, Is there any way to meet that by voluntary coercion, by compulsory law, or in any way except by the creation of a central Irish authority?—I think

there is only one way—a central Irish authority that will work for the whole of Ireland, and that will make up by large traffic in one place for the small loss in another. When they work the railways as a whole they would give greater facilities than at present, and lower rates, just as in the Post Office. They may lose on a post office in one district, but they make so highly on another that they are able to cut those rates all over the kingdom, and give fair and reasonable rates. The same thing would occur with the railways.

28494. The interests of Ireland may be protected, not by any protection or undue discrimination, but by simply providing equality of treatment—Exactly—the answer given at present is that that particular branch does not pay, and that they cannot give facilities.

28495. That will always be the answer made by the manager or the agent of any institution created for the primary purpose of earning a dividend. If you want to change that you must create an organisation the primary object of which will be the public benefit, and profit only secondary.—Yes.

28496. Do you want an expert Board?—I would like that whoever body you may have should have a certain number of trained experts on the Board, for I don't think you can work a system like that without trained experts.

28497. What I suggest is that the experts should constitute the working Board—the experts alone, who would be the best railway men, should constitute the working Board, to carry out the management of the system from day to day, and between three and the public should stand a representative body, whose functions would be to develop a policy and see what reduction of rates should be made, and to what extent they should be made?—Yes, sir; both those Boards working hand in hand; I mean that the Board you contemplate would act in consultation with the experts.

28498. I mean that the experts should be protected against sedition; they should be allowed to carry out their duties undisturbed and that the representative body should accept responsibility, and communicate with the public.—Undoubtedly.

28499. Do you agree with that?—I do, sir.

28500. Just a few words about the Finance. You spoke of the present state of the money market. Have you any doubts that the public stock of England will recover?—I believe they will. They have failed before, and they have recovered.

28501. You may take it that the present is only a transitory condition arising first from the Boer War, and then from the outbreak of commercial prosperity that has occurred since the war, and which has supplied so many competing investments, and that after a time the market will right itself?—I have no doubt of it. I was only talking of the present moment when I said it would be a bad time for it.

28502. Do you think that Ireland has a claim on the question of over-taxation, for a set-off?—Apparently we are paying three millions a year at present.

28503. The most capable of Englishmen inquired into it for two years, and they found that there was an annual excess at the time of 22 millions?—And since then it has risen to three millions.

28504. Do you think that, if honesty is to prevail in the relations between Great Britain and Ireland that matter ought not to pass without consideration?—It ought not; but my experience of the British Treasury is that it has not been honest in dealing with us, even in county matters, for the last nine years that I have been on the County Council.

28505. It is never too late to mend. Have they not shown any signs of repentance?—Very little. I am dealing with them in Technical Instruction and Agricultural Grants, and other things, and they never give an opportunity that they do not do us in the end.

28506. Apart from the over-taxation claim, a Treasury loan would be well secured by the railway premises, by the rates, and by other resources in the hands of an Irish authority?—I think there is ample security in Ireland without going for an Imperial guarantee at all.

28507. Rather than delay a settlement of this question, if the Treasury were neither persistent nor accom-

modating—would give neither a set-off nor a loan—would you prefer, in that case, that the Irish authority should create and raise a loan, and that Ireland should make itself responsible for the whole financing of the scheme?—I would.

28508. And if Ireland is willing to make herself responsible for the financing of the scheme, do you think she has an unanswerable case for obtaining control of the railways?—Certainly; I think so. If she does not ask for an Imperial guarantee she should have the control.

28509. And the savings by purchase and united working would create a fund to make reductions in rates and fares which could be obtained in no other way?—I think so.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

28510. I quite understand. Mr. Glynn, that your whole view of the State ownership of the railways assumes economy in working. Would it be your view if there was reason to believe that, so far from there being money saved, there would be less money available than ever—if it turned out that the result of amalgamation would be to make greater expense than before?—I cannot imagine such an idea.

28511. Let me give you one instance—I happen to have an official French report before me, which I have been looking at. One of the things we have often been told here is that you would reduce the head-quarter staff by putting them all together. That is one of the things they were told when they were going to amalgamate the various Swiss lines, and the fact is that they have added 1,100 new clerks. I do not say it would happen in Ireland, but, supposing there was reason to believe that anything of that kind would happen, would it alter your view?—I do not know—it would not alter my view. I think that State ownership, either by a Council or by the State, must work for efficiency and economy, and I do not think that it could result in the loss you have mentioned. I do not know what the case in Switzerland may be, and I do not know why 1,100 new clerks were engaged, and I would like to go to the bottom of it before expressing any opinion.

28512. We do know that the Government is often accused of doing things in a complicated way. You do not think much of the Treasury management?—They are admirable managers from a British point of view.

28513. It is common to hear complaints that the Government does things most extravagantly. We have heard complaints of the Board of Works?—We have often heard that of the Board of Works, that is the only Government Department we have to do with.

28514. Supposing you had reason to contemplate what the new Irish authority would be like, not what the Board of Works is, but what some people say it is?—I dislike the Board of Works, but the Post Office has been worked with a splendid profit, and that is a Government institution, and it is not worked extravagantly.

28515. You are satisfied the Irish Railway Board would be like the English Post Office—not like the Irish Board of Works?—

28516. Mr. Seaton.—The English Board of Works? (Witness).—I do not know anything about the English Board of Works.

28517. Mr. Acworth.—The Board of Works in Ireland?—

28518. Mr. Seaton.—That is more accurate.

28519. Mr. Acworth.—I want to ask more about that—about the amalgamation. I do not know whether you have any objection to express an opinion. Your connection with the railway has ceased?—It was simply for a few months.

28520. You now think that the argument was right, that it was not for the interests of the districts to bring the Great Southern in?—That is what has happened—it has not been for the interests of the district, but the reason has been that the Great Southern has not fairly worked the West; they have neglected the West completely in out opinion.

28521. We have had evidence both ways about that?—The general opinion in Tuam is that they have neglected that district.

Oct. 13, 1907.

Mr. Joseph A. Glynn, M.P.,
Representative of the
Galway
County
Council,
and the
County
Council
General
Council

The savings by the suggested purchase and united working sufficient to provide for public works in railway and lines.

Efficiency and economy would result from public ownership and control of the railways.

Tuam district not benefited by the amalgamation of the Waterford and Limerick Railway with the Great Southern and Western.

Oct 14, 1907.

Mr. Joseph A. Glynn, M.A.,
M.P.,
Representative
of the
Galway
County
Council,
and the
County
Council
General
Council.

The continuation
of competition
between the
G. & W. and the Mid.
Gt. Western
Railways
recommended
filing
petition of the
Irish
under public
control.

The State-
aided railways
in County
Galway.

Complaints
of inefficient
working of
the Loughrea
and Attymon
line by the
M. G. W.
Company.

28419. Personally you would like to see it put a stop to it—I would like to see the district properly worked.

28420. Supposing that it was the case that private railways went on in Ireland, what would you suggest ought to be done? Would you like the line handed over to the Midland?—I would like to have competition, if we could get an honest competition, but that is not what I do not think we have—a proper competition, because, as I pointed out, where the Midland and the Great Southern meet there is not great difference between a rate, but if you get the goods by the Midland, you will be blocked at Athlery. The Midland is most popular in Tuam because it is doing all in its power.

28421. Because it is not there?—Because they have got an excellent canvaser, and they are offering every facility to Tuam in excursions, and the other people won't.

28422. You said the Great Southern were popular till they got there?—We never knew anything about them; they only came as far as Limerick.

28423. What you want is competition, but you do not think it is a fair competition at present?—There is no competition in Tuam.

28424. You think the Midland is unfairly kept out, not given a fair opportunity?—I think they made a great mistake in not getting running powers the whole way up to Claremorris.

Mr. Taffee.—I think we tried.

28425. Mr. Ansell.—I think I remember Mr. Taffee doing his best. That is your view. You would like to see the competition maintained?—If you are not going to sweep them away into a general system.

28426. You think the Great Southern should compete by giving a better service and not by blocking the other people?—They are blocking the other people at present with the goods.

28427. About another question—you spoke about guarantees, after all your county is only paying £800 a year?—That is on a very small district. I think it comes to a very large amount as the pound.

28428. You are not badly off as far as other supplies go. Within the last twenty years you have got a railway from Galway to Clifden as a free present, and you got the guarantee on the Athlery to Tuam and on the Tuam to Claremorris line wiped out?—We have done very well as regards that.

28429. You have not got much to complain of?—Where we pay the money we ought to have a voice in the management, at least by a director or auditor.

28430. Yes, we have found you have the power to get an auditor?—I hope so; I want to have it investigated.

28431. You do not think there should be a solemn board of directors to manage the Loughrea and Attymon line?—I have no such idea.

28432. If you have an auditor that is all you want?—If I have an auditor that will be able to see that there are proper debits and credits given as between the Loughrea and Attymon and the Midland Company.

28433. That is a business transaction?—A business transaction.

28434. Nobody would dispute that. You say the Midland spend very little and give a very poor service?—That is the general complaint. It is a wretched slow little train.

28435. It is about the poorest part of all Ireland?—There is only one town to go into—Loughrea, I do not expect a wonderful service.

28436. I do not know what the Midland are earning, but I suspect that you know that taking the light railways of Ireland all round, it costs the whole of their receipts to work them?—I hear that is the general complaint. But there is also a general complaint that when they get a guarantee they never make the slightest effort.

28437. If it costs the whole of what they earn to work them, you would not expect the Midland would be able to work this line for half the receipts?—I would not like to express an opinion on things I do not know. I do not know what the receipts are, but I know that they complain that the Midland makes an effort to work the line at a profit. They let things go on as they like.

28438. Is not it their interest? They have got to pay for the working expenses, whatever they are—they have got to make an effort for what they get?—They will work it as cheaply as possible.

28439. No doubt they will work as cheaply as possible, but they will try not to waste money?—We are not complaining that they are wasting any money at all.

28440. You want them to spend more money?—They complain—the people of Loughrea complain—that they do not get enough facilities.

28441. I expect they only get two or three trains in the day.

28442. Mr. Taffee.—We run four trains each day, and our obligation is to run two; and we run them in twenty-one to twenty-five minutes for the eight miles.

28443. Mr. Ansell.—Do you think that Loughrea is entitled to more than that?—It is a general way they complain there of the time they are going in and out, and the delays—the interminable delays at the junction. Of course it is very hard to hit off.

28444. Mr. Taffee.—There are no delays at the junction. I do not know whether you ever travelled by it?—(Witness).—Many a time. Personally I would sooner drive. There is nothing to delay at the Junction?

28445. Mr. Ansell.—Do you really say that for a little tiny place like Loughrea four trains is bad?—They have enough trains—the one train trotting in and out all the day. They complain that—I do not know how the rates are—but they have made a complaint that they do not get enough facilities out from Loughrea—excursions, where other places get them. They do not get these chances of leaving Loughrea and going to other places, and then they complain that, if a market and fair day coincide the market ticket is stopped.

28446. Where is that?—That occurred between Moycullen and Galway; and I know it occurs between Castlebar and Westport.

28447. I do not really want to know; I have no doubt you have heard a good many complaints; but what I want to know is, do you really think there is a great grievance?—I think they have enough trains in and out.

28448. Taking twenty-one to twenty-five minutes for eight miles is not too bad?—I do not think it ever took so little as twenty-five minutes when I was on it.

28449. Mr. Seavey.—Are there any intervening stations?—One.

28450. Mr. Ansell.—Do you know the population of Loughrea?—I do not know; it is gone down; it used to be a very prosperous town years ago.

Mr. Taffee.—2,500.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson P.C.

28451. I understand you complain of the manner in which the accounts are kept by the Loughrea and Attymon people?—Our complaint is that we do not know how they are kept.

28452. You are aware that the Board of Trade appoint three arbitrators, who investigate these accounts, and you have the power to appoint an auditor—in fact it is your duty to do it?—I did not know we had the power. I knew about the arbitrators.

28453. Do you know that the Board of Works, before they authorize the payment of the Treasury remittance of two per cent. here to be attached that the accounts are properly certified by arbitrators?—Yes.

28454. Do you not think the Board of Works and the Treasury can be trusted to see that the accounts, of which they have to pay one-half, are kept in such a manner that they would be able to say they are right?—All I know is that I have been told by the arbitrators—that in our late County Surveyor (our new County Surveyor is only in a few months)—the late County Surveyor, Mr. Smith, told me their functions were confined to signing the accounts, and they compared them with the accounts submitted, and there was no question of going into whether there had been proper debits and credits.

28455. The audit is certified by the arbitrators who are appointed by the Board of Trade; one of them is the County Surveyor, and the other two are generally nominated by the Board of Works. It is on the certificate of these three gentlemen that the Board of Works pay the Treasury contribution, and I mean it is a breach of trust if they do not investigate the accounts?—I do not say they are committing any breach of trust, but I believe there is really no audit.

in the sense I want, of investigating the working of the line, to examine the accounts day by day, and see that things are properly dealt with. I want to press upon you that not only has the County Council the right, but also it is their duty, to appoint an auditor, to satisfy himself, in the first instance, that the accounts are kept in a proper form, and you have the power to appeal to the Board of Works; and it is your interest and duty to satisfy yourselves, before they pay the Treasury contribution, that the accounts are kept in a proper way—you know that for the future—I will be perfectly satisfied if we have that power.

28455. As regards the general question, I gather you are not in favour of the State taking over the railways unless they were subjected to control, at any rate, of a body responsible to Irish public opinion?—Yes.

28457. I suppose you think that the commercial element should still be maintained in the administration of railways?—I do.

28458. And that the commercial element would be wanting in a purely State Department?—Yes.

28459. Would you be prepared to make the controlling body, in the first instance, the General Council of County Councils?—A similar body to that. When I said the General Council it was because it was the only body we have at present that thoroughly represents Irish public opinion to any extent.

28460. Under them you would have a body of railway experts?—As the executive—you might call it the executive.

Colonel Piesse.—In the evidence given on Friday, by Father Meehan, he stated that a Mr. Crumley, of Keshmullen, had been penalised by having his trader's ticket withdrawn because he gave evidence before the Commission. I wish to state that there is no ground whatever for such a statement. Trader's tickets are issued in accordance with graduated scales, the minimum traffic entitling to the issue of a trader's ticket being £250 per annum. Some time ago Mr. Crumley had an extensive business, and held a trader's ticket. When this ticket expired in September, 1904, his traffic was taken out, and was found to not entitle him to a renewal. The ticket was not renewed for 1905. During that year he made representations to our Goods Manager, that the year 1904 had been a bad year for his traffic, and he stated he expected his traffic for 1905 to be very much improved. Upon that representation the ticket was issued in November, 1905, to November, 1906, and when that ticket was about to expire the

traffic was taken out for 1906, and it was found it only amounted to £120, both upon local and through, and the minimum, as I have said, is £250. He was, therefore, in November, 1906, informed that his ticket could not be renewed, because his representation had not been realised.

Mr. Ansell.—When was he examined?

Mr. Smyth (G. S. and W. Ry).—On 21st November.

28461. Mr. Serles.—Was his ticket withdrawn before or after?—It expired on 27th November.

28462. Mr. Ansell.—When was he informed it would not be renewed?

Colonel Piesse.—Immediately.

28463. Mr. Ansell.—Not till after it had expired?

Colonel Piesse.—The general thing is that a short time before the ticket expires to take out the traffic.

28464a. Chairman.—I think the point is that the ticket was stopped for 1904, not issued for 1905, as his traffic was below the minimum.

Colonel Piesse.—Then, upon his representation it was given a trial for 1905, and that representation not only was not realised, but was lost.

28464. Chairman.—There is a coincidence that his evidence corresponds, almost, to the date when the ticket expired.

Colonel Piesse.—It does not affect the circumstance.

28464a. Mr. Serles.—The evidence had been given before he learned that the ticket would not be renewed.

Colonel Piesse.—Two years before he had the same penalty.

28465. Mr. Serles.—The fact remains. He gave his evidence on the 21st, and he learned that his ticket would not be renewed on the 27th.

Colonel Piesse.—I do not say that.

28465a. Mr. Serles.—When did he learn that the ticket would not be renewed?—I could not tell you.

28466. Was it before or after the examination?—I could not tell you. If it has anything to do with it I will get the date when he applied, and when he was told it would not be renewed.

28466a. Mr. Ansell.—If it is in writing you might let us have it?—Yes.

28467. Chairman.—Is it a general rule that the traffic would be £250?—The general rule.

Mr. Smyth.—£250 is the minimum.

Chairman.—In England it is £300.

Mr. Taffee.—It is a Clearing House scale in Ireland—£250.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. Joseph A. Glynn, &c., &c.,
Representative of the
Galway County Council,
and the
County Councils' General Council.

Explanation from the
Great Northern Railway Company as to the withdrawal of Mr. Crumley's trader's ticket.

See Appendix No. 224.

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at eleven o'clock

FORTY-EIGHTH PUBLIC SITTING—TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15TH, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART. Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FISHER, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JEKYLL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON POSE, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Mr. THOMAS M'DERMOTT examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. THOMAS M'DERMOTT, Manager, Foyle and Bann Fisheries, Londonderry.

The importance of the Foyle and Bann Fisheries.

The routes by which the fish is despatched to England.

The importance of quick despatch.

The owner's risk rate adopted by owners.

The railway service for pack two years ago and its unsatisfactory character.

28466. I think you are manager of the salmon fisheries of the Foyle and Bann?—Yes.

28469. You live in Londonderry?—Yes.

28470. How long have you been connected with the fisheries?—Over forty years.

28471. I suppose, for that particular district, it is a very important industry?—Very.

28472. To what places do you send the fish?—Practically all our salmon are sent to England, chiefly to London, Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool.

28473. At any rate it is nearly exported?—Yes, except a very small quantity for local consumption.

28474. By what route do you send it?—We send all our Bann fish from Coleraine by the Larne and Stranraer route.

28475. Is there no other route?—Over the Midland system from Coleraine. There is no other route except that.

28476. Of course you could send it to Belfast?—We might send it via Belfast and Liverpool.

28477. It is not so expeditious?—No. We want to get the most expeditious route.

28478. I suppose it is essential for salmon transit to be rapid?—Yes. They are perishable goods.

28479. It makes a considerable difference in the price it fetches in the market if the fish are delayed?—That is so.

28480. The quicker the fish arrives the better the price it fetches?—Yes. It must arrive early in the market to get sold that day.

28481. At what time should it arrive in the London market?—It should be in the market between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning. The train should arrive in London some time about 7, and it takes some time to get down to Billingsgate, but it always should be there before 9.

28482. I suppose valuable fish like salmon are sent by passenger train?—Yes.

28483. They are sent by the quickest route?—Yes.

28484. That is, from the River Bann?—Yes.

28485. Is there a different route for the fish from the Foyle?—Yes; fish can be sent from the Foyle by boat on two days in the week to Liverpool from Londonderry—on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

28486. Only on two days of the week?—Yes.

28487. What do you do on the other days?—Principally by Larne and Stranraer.

28488. From the Foyle?—Yes, from Londonderry.

28489. You are aware of the owner's risk rate, and the Company's risk rate?—Yes.

28490. How do you send the fish?—At owner's risk rate.

28491. On the whole, are you satisfied with the arrangements made by the railway companies for the carriage of this fish?—No. I am very dissatisfied with it. Some years ago we had competition between the Midland and the London and North-Western Railways, and our service was much better than it is now. For the last two years it has been late almost every day, to our great loss. I shall be able to give you the correspondence that has passed between us, which I have condensed into as small a

compass as possible. It will show that our loss has been large owing to delays to fish, especially on Saturday mornings.

28492. There is a loss on the sale of fish?—The market in London closes altogether on Saturdays at two o'clock, and the fish must arrive very early that day. If they are not sold that day they cannot be sold until Monday morning, and the loss is very great.

28493. Give us an example of the time occupied in transit, that we may see whether, in our judgment, it is reasonable or unreasonable. What time do you take the fish to the station?—There is a train leaves Londonderry at ten past twelve.

28494. Do you take the fish to Londonderry?—No. The train runs through Coleraine, and it arrives at Coleraine at about ten past one o'clock.

28495. Do you send the fish to Coleraine?—Yes; the Bann fish. We deliver it at the station about one o'clock.

28496. The train leaves immediately after?—Yes.

28497. Call the day on which it leaves Wednesday; what time do you expect that fish to be in the market in London?—At seven o'clock next morning it is due in London, and we give them an hour to reach the market.

28498. It reaches London at the same time as the passenger would?—Yes.

28499. Do you contend that the fish is not sent by that particular train?—Yes. They are not sent by it; especially during the last two years, and more particularly during the last year.

28500. Mr. Sexton—Since the Midland took it up?—No. I have reason to believe that there is some arrangement between the Midland and the London and North Western by which there is no competition. Then we are not receiving the same service as we used to. I have been so informed in England.

28501. There is a pooling arrangement?—Yes. Upon this I may say that I used to be canvassed for traffic by each railway, but I have received no canvassing for the last year or two.

28502. Chairman—We have got it on record that the fish are delivered at Coleraine at one o'clock in the daytime, and are due to arrive in London at seven o'clock next morning?—That is so.

28503. What I want to know is, have you reason to believe that the fish are not sent by that particular train?—I am sure they are not sent.

28504. What do you suggest is done?—I suggest that the fish are not sent on by the passenger train but by some other train, which does not arrive in London until ten o'clock and sometimes as late as one o'clock.

28505. They miss the connection at the port?—I don't think so. I think somewhere about Carlisle. I think the service as far as Carlisle is as it used to be.

28506. You believe that the fish is carried all right from Coleraine up to Carlisle?—That is my opinion.

28507. From Carlisle, instead of going on by the train by which you or I, as a passenger, would go, it is sent on by a subsequent train?—Yes. I am

inferred that the Midland hand over all their fish to the London and North-Western at Carlisle, for the last two years, to take them on to London.

28508. To the London and North-Western?—I should be glad to hear it is not the case, but I have been informed so.

28509. We don't know. Your contention is that if the fish were carried by the same train as you or I, as a passenger, would be carried by, it would arrive in London in time for the next morning's market, and thus fetch a better price than if delayed until the following morning?—Certainly.

28510. That is your loss?—Yes; and a great loss too.

28511. Of course you have represented that to the railway companies?—Yes; I have written frequently. I have all the correspondence here.

28512. You further say that the delays have been more frequent during the last two years?—Yes.

28513. Have you altered your route during the last two years?—No; it is the same route.

28514. You have the same arrangements, and the same rates, at owner's risk; but, for some reason or other, the transit has not been so good for the last two years as previously?—Nothing at all like it.

28515. Although you stand at owner's risk rate, your contention here is that the company should be made responsible for the delay?—I should say so.

28516. Notwithstanding that you are getting the benefit of the owner's risk rate?—Yes. But we are paying a very large rate all the same. Our rate is very heavy, even the owner's risk rate.

28517. I suppose London is your principal market?—Manchester is also a very good market.

28518. I will take those two places. Give us the rates you pay to London?—I want to compare the two rates before you leave that. The rate from Colerne to London is £4 15s a ton, at owner's risk.

28519. What is the rate to Manchester?—I cannot give the rate from Colerne to Manchester, because we scarcely send any Basse fish to Manchester. It is the Foyle fish goes there.

28520. At what station is the Foyle delivered?—Londonderry. The rate from Londonderry is £4 to £4 10s to London, and to Manchester it is £3 5s 4d.

28521. That is owner's risk rate?—Yes.

28522. Having got those two rates, you suggest you want to make a comparison?—Yes. Colerne is thirty-five miles nearer London by Larne and Stranraer than is Londonderry; yet they charge £4 15s from Colerne, where we get a rate of £4 10s 4d from Londonderry.

28523. The Londonderry rate, I suppose, has been regulated by the sea competition?—Yes.

28524. Is there any other comparison you wish to make?—No.

28525. That is the point you want to make?—Yes.

28526. You said just now your opinion was there was an agreement between the two railway companies with reference to transit?—I have been so informed.

28527. If there is such an agreement, you think, in the public interest, the agreement should be published?—I think it should be published, and that there should be some means of controlling it; and that owners should not suffer loss by these arrangements. I have got no official intimation that such takes place, only I have been informed in England that such is the case, and that the fish are all handed over to the London and North-Western Company at Carlisle, and hence the delay.

28528. Although there is a route by the Midland Company from Carlisle to London?—Yes.

28529. At any rate, you draw that inference?—Yes, I do.

28530. You think, in the public interest, an agreement of that sort should be available to the public?—Undoubtedly, I think so.

28531. I think you are rather too severe on the railways here. You say that they should be made responsible for any loss caused by their not adhering to scheduled times?—I would not be so exacting as to say that they should at all times keep up scheduled time; but, barring accidents, I should say they should.

28532. What would you call lag? Would you call that an accident?—I don't know what term I would apply to it.

28533. There are causes for delay—the weather, for instance?—Yes; a snow storm or anything like that.

28534. Or a gale of wind, in fact?—Yes. I would take those into account.

28535. What you mean is this—if there is undue delay, without a proper excuse, then you think, although the traffic is being carried at owner's risk, the company should be responsible. Is not that what you mean?—Yes. You don't want the correspondences?

28536. No. You have told us. We believe what you say about that?—Last year, 1906, we had over 150 boats affected by late deliveries. I took that out since I sent in a note of my evidence.

28537. What do you call a box of salmon?—Every box is two cwt; that includes box and ice and fish.

28538. Out of the total you sent you calculate 150 boats were delayed?—Yes, in 1906, but in 1907, when we sent much less fish, there were over 300 boxes delayed. That shows how the injury is growing.

28539. What was the total number of boats you sent in those two years?—I did not take that out.

28540. What proportion does the delay bear to the total?—It varies. I could not tell you that, but the delay in 1907 was much greater, though there were much fewer boxes, and we received much greater injury.

28541. Do you pay all the carriage on the fish?—Yes. It is all carriage paid.

28542. How much do you pay to the railway company in the year?—We paid £800 odd in 1906, and about £500 in 1907.

28543. That is by all routes?—That is the salmon consigned by the Midland route. In 1906 we paid over £800 to the Midland Company for freight. That does not include any that we send by the Liverpool route. This is what we paid to the Midland people.

28544. So Herbert Jellall—£800 would represent, roughly, 2,000 boats, and the £500 paid last year would represent about 1,500 boats.

28545. Chances.—You say there were 300 delays in 1907?—Yes.

28546. Of course there were varying periods of delay?—Yes.

28547. Whenever it does not reach the market in time you call it delay?—Yes, but we have sometimes, as I tell you, the fish arriving in London at one o'clock in the day.

28548. We have got the traffic by the Midland. Do you send as much more by any other route, or by all other routes?—No.

28549. The bulk of it is what you have mentioned?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. SKEATON.

28550. When did the English Midland acquire the Northern Counties line?—I think four or five years ago.

28551. Have the losses by delay been greater since then?—Yes; we have had delays always, but up to the last two years nothing like what we have had since.

28552. The loss before the Midland came in was nothing to what it has been since?—No; nor even during the first few years working of the Midland.

28553. The loss has tripled in the last two years?—I should say it has.

28554. How do you account for that?—I account for it by some arrangement between the London and North-Western and the Midland Railway Companies. They don't take the fish direct to London or into the market.

28555. Before the Midland came in here the two English companies acted independently of each other?—Yes. Each was canvassing for custom before.

28556. Since the Midland came in and got command of this territory it has been satisfied to hand over this fresh traffic to what was formerly the competing line?—That is my reading of it.

28557. Where does this happen?—At Carlisle, I am told.

28558. The arrival of the Midland has not been a

Oct. 18, 1907.

Mr. Thomas M'Dermott, Messrs. Foyle and Bann Fisheries, Londonderry.

The competing companies should be held responsible for delay in transit irrespective of owner's risk rates.

The delays to the traffic alleged to be on the line.

The extent of the fish traffic involved.

Increase by the delays to traffic since the Midland of England acquired the Northern Counties Railway.

Oct. 15, 1907

Mr. Thomas
McDonnell,
Manager
Ferry and
Fish
Factories,
Londonderry.

benefit to you?—Certainly not, in that way nor in any other way that I know.

23558. Could you measure in money the actual loss that you incur by uncompensated delays?—Sometimes the loss would be as much as a penny in the pound, sometimes as much as twopence, but a penny a pound would be a very low estimate to put on the loss; that would be 12s. 6d. a ton.

23559. Is this traffic capable of much expansion?—No. I don't think we are going to have a heavier traffic.

23560. If you lose in a year 300 boxes, do they become totally uneatable?—We lose from a penny a pound according to the time they are kept.

23561. The degree of loss is varied according to the length of the delay?—Yes.

23562. Would any of the fish be uneatable?—I don't think so. We never lost any fish.

23563. It would be deterioration?—Yes.

23564. What would be the average loss?—When I put on a penny a pound it would be quite within the loss.

23565. What are the contents of a box?—140 to 150 pounds. If the weather is cold it is 150; if the weather is hot we put in less.

23566. The losses would be over £150 in the year?—Yes.

23567. Would that £150 be a substantial proportion of your profits in the year?—Some years it would be altogether our profit.

23568. What proportion does the £150 a year bear to your usual profits for the year out of the fishery?—The profit varies in the fishing.

23569. Do you publish accounts?—No.

23570. Does it diminish your profits substantially?—Certainly. If you like I will tell you that this year it has taken them all away.

23571. Chairman.—Salmon has been very cheap?—No. It has been very scarce.

23572. Mr. Sexton.—The loss in transit for which you receive no compensation has wiped out your profits?—I mean to say that this year we have no profits.

23573. Is the absence of profits due to uncompensated loss in transit?—It is one of the items.

23574. Important items?—Very important items. You take 300 times 12s. 6d. to make it up.

23575. Is it evident that the question of compensation for loss in transit lies at the root of your industry?—It does.

23576. It may make all the difference in a year between no return for your capital and perhaps a satisfactory return?—It affects in that way certainly.

23577. There were various degrees of blame to the railway company attaching to these different losses?—I always dealt with the manager of the Midland in Belfast. My communications were always addressed to Mr. Cowie in Belfast.

23578. There were some occasions of loss on which there was manifestly heavy blame attached to the carrying companies in transit?—Undoubtedly.

23579. Would you give instances of that?—In 1906 we lost on one day's shipment over £40, but to be just to the railways it was the Saturday before the general holiday. It was, I think, Saturday, the 4th of August.

23580. That would be a very exceptional case?—Yes. However, I asked them to see that our fish were delivered in time, but they were not, and could not be sold until the Tuesday following, and we lost over £40 that day.

23581. At ordinary times what is the worst that happens to you in regard to transit? Is it to be late for market?—Yes; so late that the fish cannot be sold that day, or if they are sold they have to be sold at low price.

23582. Have you ever received compensation for any loss in transit?—I don't think so.

23583. Have you claimed it?—I have asked it, but I never got it.

23584. At all, in any case?—I am speaking from recollection. I don't think so.

23585. Would these 300 boxes cover a great many cases?—Yes. They would cover 40 or 50 cases, perhaps.

23586. Your custom is to apply for compensation?—We did apply some times for compensation, but as far as I recollect we never got any compensation for delays in transit.

23587. The result discourages further applications?—I have been advised we cannot enforce our

claim. I have been a letter from the London and North Western Company to Messrs. Grant and May, one of our agents in London, with reference to a claim for delay in the delivery of fish from Scotland. We never got such a reply as this. This is a similar claim to what we have made. (Hands in letter.)

23588. While the letter is being read by the chairman could you put in, in a comprehensive form, the correspondence between yourself and the company which shows your claims and the results?—Yes; I have copied these letters and telegrams (indicates document).

23589. Chairman.—This letter can be read, though it does not refer to Irish traffic.

23590. Witness.—The letter is—"London and North Western Railway District Superintendent's Office, Euston Station, London, 4th Sept., 1907.—Gentlemen.

—With reference to your claim for 24 6s. 10s. delay to two consignments of salmon on the 20th and 21st June respectively, and our representative's recent call upon you, I beg to say that the delay in such case was through the late running of the trains, and was quite unavoidable, but it is very much regretted. I must, however, definitely decline to entertain your claim under the owner's risk conditions of carriage.

You may be aware that on account of our agreement with other railway companies, respecting English, Scotch, and Welsh traffic, which is carried at the owner's risk rate, we are prohibited from meeting claims upon such traffic, even if we were disposed to do so.—Yours truly, for H. A. Walker, G.D." That letter is addressed to Messrs. Grant and May, one of our agents in London, who sell our fish.

23591. Mr. Sexton.—They say here in consequence of some agreement, of which you know nothing, between themselves and other companies, if they were disposed to grant the claim their line will be gone, and they are deterred from doing so?—Yes.

23592. Are you putting in that correspondence?—Yes.

23593. Mr. Sexton.—I should think it would be important to see why losses so material to your company are not compensated for in any degree whatever.

23594. Chairman.—We know that you applied for compensation on the ground of delay, and that the compensation was refused?—Yes (hands in correspondence). * One of these refers to 1906 and the other to 1907.

23595. Mr. Sexton.—All your traffic is carried at owner's risk rate?—Yes.

23596. You call it a high rate?—Yes.

23597. Why is it all carried at owner's risk?—To save money.

23598. If it was carried at company's risk rate could you sell the salmon at a profit?—We have to economise in every line that is possible, and we adopted that line for the purpose of saving expense.

23599. If you carried at company's risk would it make your trade precarious?—It would diminish our profits.

23600. Therefore, as a commercial matter, you are tied down to the owner's risk rate?—We are.

23601. Would you say that the difference between owner's risk rate and company's risk rate should not be so great as to compel you to adopt the owner's risk rate, I mean that there should be a true option?—There should be a true option.

23602. Would you desire to have a company's risk rate if you might adopt it without incurring such expense as would undermine your business?—That is so.

23603. Driven as you are to the owner's risk rate, what do you say to the payment of that rate?—I say that it is too high.

23604. About the present regulation, that you cannot recover from the company except you prove they have been guilty of wilful misconduct?—That is altogether wrong. If they agree among themselves to delay transit of our fish to our loss, why should not we have the power to recover the loss.

23605. All you know, in a case of delay, is that your fish fails to reach Billingsgate, or wherever you want to sell it, in time for the market?—That is right.

23606. You have no proof of the reason why it was not delivered?—I have been told, and I think that this Commission can find out, that it is because of this agreement. I will be glad if some representative of the railway will come up and show me that I am wrong.

* See Appendix No. 15.

The usual
loss caused
by delay to
fish in transit

The consequent
serious effect
on the
prosperity of
the fish
industry

Claims for
compensation
made to the
railway com-
panies but
never
admitted.

Cat. 15, 1907

Mr. Thomas
McDonnell,
Manager
Foyle and
Bann
Fisheries,
London E.C.The excess of
the Coleraine
rate for fish
to London
over the
Derry figure
not justified
by the sea
competitionStatement
relating to
delays in
transit of
fish, years
1896-7.See Appendix
No. 18.No preference
for any
particular
company's
route, the
early arrival
of the fish
in the London
market the
chief con-
sideration.

23607. Certainly; both sides will be fully heard—I hope someone will put me right if I am wrong. I always like to be put right.

23608. Is it practically impossible for you, no matter how much loss you suffer, to prove wilful misconduct on the part of the carrier?—Surely it is. I really don't know how it could be done at present.

23609. When they lay it down as a condition that you must prove wilful misconduct they might as well say they will not pay for any loss!—It would be almost the same.

23610. What is the proper remedy? Is it to reduce the company's risk rate to a moderate one, or else to have one rate only, which would oblige the company to pay any loss whenever they are in fault?—I should say they should pay the loss when they are in fault.

23611. In case of what is called the act of God, a fog, or anything beyond their control, you would not hold them liable?—I would not say a word.

23612. But if your fish are delayed, and you lose money, do you think you have an equitable claim to compensation unless the company can show that it was not their fault?—That is my opinion.

23613. You think that reform in the owner's risk rate agreement is urgently required?—I think it is.

23614. Is the owner's risk rate something peculiar to these countries—not generally adopted in railway transit through the world?—I am not conversant with much outside the fish traffic. I really could not say.

23615. But with a railway company, as with any other person who contracts to do you a service, for which you pay, do you maintain it would be a just and necessary principle of law if that service be defective or badly performed, that the person with whom the contract is made should be compensated?—Certainly, and I think if the railway people knew that they would make an effort to have the fish in time.

23616. You think you are embarrassed and prejudiced by some arrangement between the two companies, which formerly competed?—I do.

23617. Have you heard that there is a great tendency now among the great companies to enter into what are called pooling arrangements?—I have.

23618. We know before now they agreed upon rates so as to deprive the public of competition rates; and now it appears that they have devised pooling agreements so that they not only agree upon the rates, but it becomes a matter of indifference which company carries the traffic, because they divide the proceeds of the traffic they produce in a certain proportion among themselves!—That is what I understand.

23619. Transit affects the public interest very much. It concerns the living and the interest of the whole community?—Very much indeed.

23620. You hold, as I understand, that public carriers are not entitled secretly to evade with each other any agreements which may prejudice the public?—Yes, I do.

23621. At any rate the public should have an opportunity of seeing, by inspection of the agreement, whether they are prejudiced or not?—They should, certainly.

23622. You hear a great deal about competition and what the country would lose if the railways were run as one system by a public authority. Here we have an instance of competition where there are two companies running between certain points in Great Britain, and one of them hands over the fish to be carried over that distance by the other, and to that system you attribute the late arrival of the fish and the loss you suffer?—Yes.

23623. About the rates from Coleraine and Derry for the Bann fish you are tied down to the land route?—Yes.

23624. For the Foyle fish you have four routes?—Yes. You might send by various routes.

23625. By sea and land?—Yes.

23626. We understand the topography of the question. They charge 4s. 4d. a ton less by rail to Belfast and water to England than from Coleraine, though the journey from Coleraine is 35 miles shorter?—Yes.

23627. The reason assigned for that difference is the existence of sea competition from Derry?—I think that is the reason, but I don't know that they have ever assigned a reason to me for doing it.

23628. Is that the reason usually assigned for it?—I believe that is the reason.

23629. Does the port of Derry afford you by sea an effective competition as against the rail from Derry?—No; we could not send all our fish by sea, because the sea voyage is a very long voyage, 18 or 20 hours, and sometimes longer.

23630. There is no true competition?—No. We can only send two days a week, and that only to Liverpool, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. We could not send fish to London by that route.

23631. Therefore, when the railway companies say they are entitled to allow a low rate from Derry by 8s. 4d. a ton by rail than they allow from Coleraine, which is a shorter route by 35 miles, and give as a reason that the rail traffic from Derry would otherwise go by sea, is not that really an illusion? Is it a true argument?—Not if they have taken all the facts into consideration. I am afraid, maybe, I should not have let it all out.

23632. Does it appear that Coleraine is prejudiced to the extent of 8s. 4d. a ton by an argument which has no substantial basis in fact?—That is so, but I don't suffer for that.

23633. You suffer at Coleraine?—Yes, but not at Derry.

23634. You say there is nothing in the circumstances of the sea traffic at Derry to entitle the company to penalise Coleraine to the extent of 8s. 4d. a ton?—Yes.

23635. Chairman.—I see that in the statement which you have handed in you have made out summaries of all the telegrams you received from the sellers of fish in the market during the years 1896 and 1897, and I think it would be advisable to have those printed in the appendix. You have made a very nice abstract?—I made that as short as I could.

23636. Mr. Stoen.—Do the telegrams give the substance of the controversies between you and the company?—Yes.

Mr. Harrington.—Will the telegrams show where they arrived?

Lord Pirbright.—It does not show by what station they arrived in London.

Chairman.—They arrived at the fish market.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

23637. I suppose you don't care, provided your fish get to London and arrive in good condition, by what railway they are carried?—I do not.

23638. You think it used to be good with the Midland from Carlisle?—No. There was a time when the two railway companies would take the unassigned fish month about from Stranraer to London and other markets. If the Midland got June the North Western would get July, and so on, but if I cared to enquire there by a particular route they always went by that route.

23639. You did enquire by the Midland?—No.

23640. You don't see which way it goes as long as you get the fish delivered?—Yes, if I can get the fish carried I have no interest in the railway.

23641. I have been looking at the time-table, and see that by the Stranraer route the train arrives at Carlisle at about 11 o'clock in the morning, and there are express trains to meet it, both of the Midland and the North Western. The North Western train is timed to get into London at 10 minutes past 7, and the Midland train gets in at two minutes to 8. I thought the Midland was much earlier.

23642. That is what the time-table says: so it would not be a disadvantage to you to have it taken by the North Western Company rather than by the Midland, if they run equally punctually?—No. It would be an advantage to us.

23643. There is no reason to suppose that one line is worse than the other?—No.

23644. About owner's risk, I confess I am rather puzzled. You send all your traffic at owner's risk?—Yes.

23645. When your company first started they signed a risk rate, in which they said they agreed, in consideration of a reduced rate, to exempt the railway company from liability?—I don't know. It may have been, but it was unknown to me, and it has not been as far as I know in my time.

Owner's risk rate
not
distance dis-
counted.

On 12, 1907.

Mr. Thomas
H. Donnell,
Manager
(By Mr. Donnell)
Bona
Fisheries,
Londonberry.

Owner's risk
on fish
damages—con.

Fish rates,
Coleraine and
Londonberry
to London

28646. Will you take it from me that every con-
signor of traffic at owner's risk rate does enter into
a bargain in which he agrees not to claim except for
wilful misconduct?—I should not wonder but that is
the fact, but I don't know.

28647. Lord Ferris.—Is not that extended?—Is there
no word about delay on that note.

28647a. Mr. Donnell.—Except for wilful miscon-
duct, is practically the operative part of the clause.

Mr. Craker Barrington, Solicitor.—Those are the
words. What remains enters into another question.

28648. Mr. Donnell.—You say you send it all at
owner's risk?—Yes.

28649. What is the rate per ton from Coleraine and
Londonberry?—£4 15s. from Coleraine and £4 6s. 8d.
from Derry.

28650. You have given a rate here, railway com-
pany's risk London £5 3s. 4d.; where is that from?—
Is that from Coleraine?—I am not quite clear, but
the difference would be very little.

28651. Let us suppose it is the same, company's
risk £5 3s. 4d.; you have told me the owner's risk is
£4 15s. That is a difference of 18s. 4d. Is it?

28652. If you chose to pay 15s. 4d. more per ton,
which would be about a shilling more per ton, you
could send it at company's risk?—Yes.

28653. Then you would be entitled to claims for de-
lay, and they would be liable by law for delay, unless
they could prove it was mere accident, what Mr.
Sutton called the act of God, or something of the
kind?—There would be a good many acts of God
if you did that.

28654. What do you mean by that?—They would
waive out of it in some way.

28655. You mean to say the legal right to get de-
mages would be no use to you?—I think we would
have a lot of trouble over it.

28656. You have written to them asking for de-
mages?—I have.

28657. They have replied they are not liable?—Their
replies were always very nice and very smooth, and
they let me do all the rough work and use all the
hard names. They did not do that, but they did not
give me anything.

28658. Suppose you sent at company's risk, they
would have known that the law was on your side?—
They would, but they would have some way of getting
out of it, I fear.

28659. So you don't think if legally they were
bound to pay for damage it would be any good to you?

—No. I have such a lot of trouble making claims for
overcharge and loss by railways, that you would nearly
as soon lose a lot as go into it. You are referred
from one department to another.

28660. If that is so, and if a legal right to get
something out of them is not worth anything to you,
what is to be done?—I would like to have a legal
right and a low rate if we could. We think the lowest
rate is a high rate.

28661. You do think the legal right is worth some-
thing?—They would have to pay sometimes. Some
fighting individual would appear sometimes and make
them pay.

28662. You think it would be an advantage to have
the legal claim that you have not now because you have
chosen to take the lower rate without the claim?—
Yes, because then they would make an effort to put
our fish into the market for us in time.

28663. That would cost a shilling a box extra?—It
would be more. There are ten boxes to the ton.

28664. It would be 1s. 3d.?—Is 3d.

28665. Call it 1s. 4d. The box contains 150 pounds
of salmon?—Yes.

28666. We might call that worth a shilling a
pound?—Yes.

28667. That is 27 worth of salmon in the box?—
Yes.

28668. Don't you think if the thing is as bad
as you say it would be worth your company's while
to pay a shilling extra to get a claim for damages
for 27 worth of salmon?—No. I think we should
stick to what we are at. The railway should be com-
pelled to have the fish in time.

28669. What we want to do is to see how you are
to get it in. You don't think it worth while to pay
a shilling in order to be able to claim 27 damages?—
We could not claim 27 damages. If the whole box
is lost we can get the damage any way.

28670. You say the damage generally would be
a penny a pound. That would be 12s. 6d. on the
box?—Yes.

28671. If there was 12s. 6d. worth of damage and
you paid 1s. or 1s. 3d. extra you would be able to get
it back?—Yes.

28672. Do you think that would pay?—Yes.

28673. Yet you stick to owner's risk rate?—Yes.

28674. Then you cannot expect them always to
treat them as badly as they are now or it would not
pay you?—They have been treating me so badly the
last two years that I don't know what is going to
happen when another year comes round.

28675. Why don't you try the company's risk and
see what happens?—We will soon have to give them
the salmon altogether.

28676. You are quite sure it is not worth while
to give them the company's risk rate?—I would not
go that far but I think we are paying quite enough.

28677. No doubt, and they think you are paying
little enough?—You could not satisfy them.

28678. All the traders do stick to the company's
risk rate in spite of the disadvantage?—I should not
wonder at all.

28679. Mr. Sutton said it was a great difference.
Does it seem to you that the difference of 18s. 4d.
in £5 of is a very big difference?—It is a large per-
centage.

28680. For taking the risk?—Yes.

28681. There is a great deal of risk with salmon.
It is very perishable and very valuable?—It is.

28682. You think it is too big a difference?—Yes.

28683. Suppose the difference was 6s. 8d. instead
of 18s. 4d.?—I think a far smaller sum than that
would be taken for the railways.

28684. Your evidence is that a very great number
would have to be paid for?—I have given you the
numbers and shown you how they have been growing.

28685. Certainly. He has frankly admitted that
these delays have been within the last two years, but
that before that it was satisfactory?—Yes.

28686. Mr. Sutton. He also said that the main
benefit of the company's risk would be to procure
greater care in the management of the traffic and tend
to abolish the custom for claims?—Certainly. I am
sure that that would be the case.

28687. Do you think that the owner's risk rates at
the bottom of page two of your report and the com-
pany's risk rates at the top of the next page are
taken between the same points of departure and
destination?—Yes.

28688. In that case the lowest difference between
owner's and company's risk rates is 16s. 8d. and on
traffic to Birmingham and London it is as much as
£12. 8d. per ton?—Yes.

28689. That is a prohibitive difference?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINGS P.Q.

28690. With regard to this question of owner's risk
and company's risk, I dare say you are aware that
a deputation waited on the President of the Board
of Trade last December. It was introduced by Mr.
Hooper, a Member of Parliament, who took a great
deal of interest in that question. Mr. Lloyd George's
view with regard to company's risk was that it
should be ascertained what would be the fair rate of
insurance, and that the company should then be ob-
liged to offer an owner's risk rate to those who liked
to take it, and, if they did not like that, to offer an
owner's risk rate plus a rate determined on as a fair
rate of insurance; in other words, that an addition
of five or ten per cent might be determined on as
representing the risk undertaken by the carrying
company; and if the trader did not choose to take that
they must take the owner's risk and accept the conse-
quence. I dare say you remember that that was so?
—Yes.

28691. In confirmation of that view we had evidence
from Mr. O'Connor, a cattle trader, in July, who ad-
vocated something on the same principle. He even
went so far as to say that as consequence of the
difficulties which he and other cattle traders had with
respect to carrying at owner's and company's risk
rates, his association was in the habit now of in-
suring against risk with the Ocean Marine Insurance
Company, which took all the risks for something like
a halfpenny in the £, which is an extremely low per-
centage. Mr. O'Connor advocated with regard to his

The railway
rates excessive,
and the
right to
claim for
delays not
compensation
for the extra
freight

own particular trade that insurance should be obligatory on cattle traders; and if that was the case the railway company could afford to charge a very low rate in addition to ordinary owner's risk rate; they could take all the risk while the additional charge for insurance which the trade would have to pay would be so small that it would be of no consequence whatever. Do you agree with that suggestion?—I have not given that a thought.

28702. It seems a very reasonable one—a rate of from five to ten per cent.—In carrying cattle if one gets a leg broken or is killed, you can easily tell what damage is done, but in carrying fish you have to bring the salmon and your slippers here, and all that to prove your case.

28703. If the company had some system such as I mention, which was advocated by Mr. O'Connor and is contradictory of the views of the President of the Board of Trade, a gentleman of experience in such matters, and if they were authorised to charge an additional rate to cover the additional risk run, in the shape of an insurance premium, they would take very good care, somehow or other, that all trade should be handled very carefully?—Would an insurance company insure a railway against their own acts in such cases?

28704. Apparently in this particular case Mr. O'Connor said that the Ocean Marine Company are prepared to insure cattle—I think that would be regarding accidents against cattle.

28705. Why should not the same principle with some modification be applied to the carriage of any article?—It is impossible to get an insurance company to insure the London North Western Company against loss because they did not run their trains to arrive in London at seven o'clock in the morning.

28706. The railway companies would make what agreements they like with the insurance companies. It would be a matter for arrangement between them and the insurance companies as to the terms upon which insurance was effected?—I think that scheme is hardly feasible.

28707. If it were feasible don't you think it would be satisfactory?—Anything to modify the loss would be satisfactory.

28708. At present the figures you give me show that the company's risk is 25 per cent. above the owner's risk rate?—It is, I am sure.

28709. Of course that is a rather onerous charge, much more than, in the opinion of people who have considered the question, would cover the extra risk run by the company.

28710. As regards the industry which you represent, am I right in saying that the public, generally, in this country have a far greater interest in fishing than the public in England and Scotland. In nearly all the rivers of Ireland there are public rights in the tidal waters?—No.

28711. I think you will find there are, except in the Blackwater?—They have no public rights in the Foyle, or in the Ban, Moy, or Erne.

28712. In the report which was published by the committee that set to investigate the working of the Department the justification given of the expenditure of public money on inland fisheries is that the public have the right to fish in the tidal waters of rivers, except in the Blackwater and a few other salmon fisheries. It goes on to say that the annual value of the Irish salmon fishery is about £300,000, of which £240,000 represents the public interest. That is not the case in Scotland, in which there are no public rights in salmon rivers at all, while in England they only exist to a much smaller degree than in Ireland. That is in the report of the committee issued a few months ago after taking the evidence of the inspectors of fisheries and so on. I think I understood you to say that you expected last year something like 2,000 boxes by the Midland Railway Company?—I am sure I did not give you the exact numbers.

28713. You said £800 was paid in freight and that represents about 2,000 boxes?—Yes.

28714. The return of the Department does not pretend to be absolutely accurate, but it is approximately correct, and it gives the total weight of salmon and trout earned from other ports than Dublin and Cork as 5,000 cwt., of which they say 2,054 cwt. went from Greenore. Assuming that is all correct, that means only 1,000 boxes, and yet you say that you send 2,000 boxes?—We paid £800 in freight.

28715. Do you, in addition to what you send over the Midland system, also send considerable traffic over other systems?—We send some—not a great lot.

28716. According to your evidence, which, I am sure, is accurate, the figures given by the Department are not very reliable?—No. I have said nothing of the earnings of fish through Greenore, Dublin, or any other place. My figures have reference only to fish from Derry and Coleraine. We send nothing by Greenore.

28717. With regard to the complaints which you speak of as being so frequent and as resulting in very serious loss, have you made any representations to the Department of Agriculture?—No.

28718. You may not be aware that they have interfered in numerous cases in the interests of different traders?—I prefer dealing direct with the people responsible. This is the first complaint I have made of a public kind.

28719. Were you aware that the Department had these powers?—I was not aware that they had any powers.

28720. I think it a great pity that every trader in Ireland should not be aware of these powers?—I am very glad to know that they have power.

28721. There was one complaint last year with regard to the earnings of mackerel from the South of Ireland which resulted in the railway company running an additional train to meet that particular grievance of which the fishermen had complained. Probably if you had complained to them it would have resulted in a similar benefit?—I really thought it was only the Board of Trade that could interfere.

28722. The Department has got powers under the Act which constituted it.

28723. Lord Pirrie.—To deal with Irish railways.—(Hear, hear).—This is not a complaint against Irish railways.

28724. Colonel Hutchinson Pae.—Have not you some cod fisheries on the Ban as well?—Only at one spot, where it is not of much value, but I may as well tell you that on Thursday we sent a box of cods from the Ban to London. They brought 10 shillings a draft—that is 22 lbs.—and on Friday we sent another box of cods. They brought 9 shillings a draft, with this explanation—"These fish did not arrive until 10.30. No use sending for late market on Saturday."

28725. Lord Pirrie.—What was the first price?—10s.

28726. And the next price?—8s, a draught.

28727. Chairman.—That is quite true. You should not send on a Saturday?—Do people not eat fish on a Saturday or Sunday?

28728. But the market is over early on Saturday morning?—They should have been there at eight o'clock on the Saturday morning.

28729. But the train is not due till after eight?—But they did not arrive till 10.30. Are we to send in no fish on the Saturday at all—has it come to that? I may as well tell you that during last August the delays were so frequent that I had at last to send them to other markets than London, and I endeavoured, as far as possible, to send no fish arriving on Saturday morning.

28730. Exactly?—But look at how our trade is hampered by the railway company's action? I do not see how such action can be defended.

28731. Colonel Hutchinson Pae.—You have a small industry, but as there are not also a large industry?—The large industry is in the hands of Messrs. Ellis and Brice.

28732. That is very valuable?—Yes, very valuable.

28733. I think worth £15,000 a year?—I do not know.

28734. Do you consider that the Ban fishery gets a proper amount of attention from the Conservators and the Department generally?—I do not.

28735. Could it be improved upon in any way?—It could be very much improved.

28736. Are you under the Board of Conservators?—We are.

28737. Has Mr. Green got anything to say to it?—Yes; he is the chief inspector of the Department.

28738. He takes a great interest in the development of both sea and inland fishing?—Yes; but we are hampered by want of sufficient funds to protect the fisheries of the Ban.

28739. Are you aware that under the Local Government Act of 1890, the District Councils have the power of assisting financially boards of conservators on

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. Thomas McDermott, Manager Foyle and Ban Fisheries, Londonderry.

The powers of the Department of Agriculture to assist traders to obtain redress of railway grievances.

Delay to a consignment of cods for London from the Ban.

Complaint of having to market fish elsewhere than in London owing to delays in transit.

The Ban fishery do not get proper attention from the Board of Conservators and the Department of Agriculture.

The powers conferred by the Local Government Act of 1890 on District Councils to assist financially boards of conservators.

Oct. 18, 1897.

Mr. Thomas
McDonnell,
Manager
Fyvie and
Boles
Fisheries,
Londonderry.
Representa-
tion of the
County
Council on the
Board of
Conservators.

representation being made to them?—Yes; I am aware of that, but they have never done it, as far as I know. They have never taken advantage of that.

22730. Would you be in favour of the County Council having any representation on the Board of Conservators?—Yes, if they paid.

22731. If they contributed something towards the development of the fishery, you would not object to their being represented on the Board of Conservators?—I would not object at all.

22732. You are aware that that is one of the recommendations which have been put forward in the report to which I alluded just now?—I know it is embodied in the Act of 1894 or 1895.

22733. They have been given power, but it has not been exercised?—No, it has not been exercised.

22734. Unless they contributed. But the view which the Commissioners took was that even if they did not contribute, in view of great interest which the whole public had in the fisheries of Ireland, these local bodies should, independently of any contribution, be given some voice in the conservators' duties?—Oh, they have enough to do without giving them any more work.

22735. Who?—The County Councils?

22736. I think that many of the gentlemen on these County Councils would be very glad to devote some of their spare time to assist in the development of the fisheries of the country?—I do not see what good they could do, except to put more money into the protection of the fisheries. The whole secret is to get money to protect them.

22737. At any rate, you would give them representation, if they gave you more assistance?—Undoubtedly.

Examined by Lord FERRIS.

22738. You complain that the Irish traffic is delayed at Carlisle, or some other English or Scotch station, although the Scotch traffic is allowed to go through—that your traffic is delayed, and that the Scotch or English traffic is not?—I do not know that that is the case.

22739. Have you not heard from your agent in London whether the Scotch traffic, such as the Aberdeen traffic, that goes by the passenger trains, is equally late with yours?—I have not heard, and never inquired.

22740. Do you not think that with such an important traffic as yours, it should be your first duty to write to your agent in London enquiring whether other traffic that comes by the same train through Carlisle is delayed. Is it the fact that they get in? Would not that be one of your first duties as a commercial man?—Well, perhaps I have been remiss in not doing what you say, but you will see by the letter put in evidence that they have also suffered.

22741. I want to get it on the minutes clearly?—I never inquired whether other people's fish were late or not.

22742. Now, has your agent looked to this. When the fish go by the Larne and Stranraer route, there are two waggons—one of the North Western Company and one of the Midland. Your traffic is collected at the Bann and at Coleraine, and there is only the Midland Company there to send that traffic. You have no reason to think that when the traffic gets to Carlisle, which is practically the Midland Railway's terminus, as it were, where they join the Scotch line—you do not know that that traffic is taken out of the Midland line and sent on in the North Western?—That I really do not know.

22743. You have no information on that subject?—No; I have given all the information that I have; but at Carlisle there is some changing.

22744. Now, is the man who collects your fish in London and takes it to the market your agent or the railway company's?—Oh, the railway company deliver direct to the market.

22745. And therefore you would know whether it was the North Western or the Midland Railway that carried it, would you not?—Oh, yes, agent would.

22746. Have you ever asked him?—I have asked him.

22747. And what does he say?—They say sometimes it is the North Western.

22748. And therefore it does apparently get changed somewhere between Stranraer and London?—That is what I have been informed.

22749. Well, now as to the time of the arrival of these trains in the morning, from Carlisle, by the North Western, and also the Midland, in fact frequently the whole of those trains. I suppose you are aware that the passenger traffic has been delayed, broadly speaking, an hour to an hour and a half. I went by that very train you are speaking of that is due at 8 o'clock and we did not get in until 10.50?—You would have an action for damages.

22750. The very train your fish are supposed to be in?—Yes.

22751. And therefore the same complaint as to the arrival of that train could be made by a passenger if he was there?—If he was delayed, surely.

22752. Do you consider that you are being badly treated if your fish are being delivered in London at the same time as the passenger?—Yes. And that passenger considers he is badly treated, too, if he is kept till half-past eleven o'clock, when he should get in at eight.

22753. Mr. Section—But he is not deteriorated a penny in the pound by that?—No.

22754. Lord Ferris—From your experience as to the arrival of that train, you would not be surprised to hear that a guard in Aberdeen told me that the trains are all running late and starting late. We were an hour late in starting and we were two and a half hours late in arriving?—Why should they be late in starting?

22755. That is what you complain of. The railway companies should arrange to make their trains arrive punctually?—Yes.

22756. And the fish are more important than the passenger?—I do not say that.

22757. As Mr. Section has very properly told you, the passenger does not deteriorate by being late?—No.

22758. But the fish does?—Yes.

22759. And therefore the fish should be more punctually delivered than this passenger?—Well, they should be delivered as punctually. They would want to keep the delivery regular. Deterioration is one thing, but losing your market is another. Your factor can keep the fish fresh for twenty-four hours by using them.

22760. And that is what I am trying to hold you to—that you consider the fish traffic should be carried on even more punctually than the passenger traffic, so that they can get the market?—Yes, that is so.

22761. And that your general complaint is that the fish traffic whether on the North Western or the Midland during the past year has not been as regular as it was before?—No.

22762. I quite corroborate it, because I have travelled a good deal?—I am glad of your expression of opinion.

22763. I need not ask what you pay your salesman at Billingsgate?

22764. O'Brien—Oh, no?—Here it is.

22765. Oh, we know all that.

Mr. R. G. GALLAGHER, D.E., M.T.S.V. & E., ASSISTED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

Mr. R. G.
Gallagher,
P.O. 1897-98,
County
Surveyor,
Wicklow.

22766. You are the County Surveyor of Wicklow?—Yes, sir.

22767. And have you been requested by the County Council to give evidence?—I have been directed by them to do so, sir.

22768. I suppose you are acquainted with the town of Blessington in that county?—Yes; it is a very small village, with no local industry that I know of, and the traffic coming to it is principally tourist traffic.

22769. There is a steam tramway there?—Yes, a steam tramway.

Situation and
description of
the Dublin
and Blessington
Steam
Tramway.

22770. From where?—From TROVING, a suburb of this city.

22771. A suburb of Dublin. And it runs to Blessington?—Yes.

22772. What is it—a light railway?—It has the usual full gauge—the Irish gauge. It is laid on the side of the road. It is placed partly on the side of the road on a slightly raised platform, with flat-foot rails, generally in bad condition and worn out.

22773. How was it constructed?—It was constructed by a private company. They have got a guarantee from the County of Wicklow and from the

County of Dublin. The Wicklow guarantee is on £30,000, a 5 per cent. perpetual guarantee, and the Dublin guarantee is on £30,000 capital also.

22773. Is that £30,000 guarantee of the County Wicklow agreed over the whole county?—No, sir; only on Nias No. 2 Rural District and Balminglass No. 1 Rural District and portion of Rathdown No. 2 Rural District. The Rathdown portion is part of Nias which was taken from it. Originally it was Nias and Balminglass.

22774. Then the rating area is very limited?—Very limited.

22775. And how much in the pound have the ratepayers to pay?—They are supposed not to pay more than a shilling in the pound in any one year, but since I have had to deal with them they have had to pay variable amounts, about 11d.

22776. What is it this year?—I do not know.

22777. Last year?—Practically 10d. in the pound.

22778. Colonel Hutchinson Poole?—But is there not some recognition?—Yes; they got some of the money back.

22779. It is really only 5d.?—Really only 5d.

22780. Chairman.—What is the length of the line?—A total of fifteen miles; 13 being in the County Wicklow. It runs partly along the county boundary. I may say that the County Kildare derives a large benefit, but they pay nothing.

22781. It is worked by steam power?—It is worked by steam power.

22782. Has this particular tramway any statutory powers to run over any other railway?—They have, over the Dublin United Tramway's Company's system. They have powers to run over that, but they do not do so.

22783. They do not exercise the powers?—They do not; principally on account of the difference in gauge and the peculiarity of the wheels. Our wheels on the Blessington line are too wide for the rails of the Dublin United Tramways Company.

22784. Mr. Asenath.—You say that the flanges are too wide?—Yes, too thick.

22785. That makes it impossible to run on them?—They did once or twice, simply to exercise the right.

22786. Chairman.—How is this little tramway managed?—By a board of six directors.

22787. How are they elected?—Four by the company, and two others, one by each county, baronial directors, as they are called, now District Councils.

22788. Now, I do not want all the figures for the several years, but just tell me what were the gross receipts in 1905-6?—£5,746 13s. 5d.

22789. And what were the expenses?—£6,072 5s. 5d.

22790. And what is the net profit?—The net profit on train mileage.

22791. Mr. Asenath.—Say, five years' average.

22792. Mr. Seaton.—The average is about £700 a year, is it not?—Yes, practically; but it varies a good deal.

22793. It does not go over £1,000?—One year it was over £1,000, but that was in the early period of the line.

22794. Chairman.—Does the traffic grow very little or is it practically stationary?—It is practically stationary; well, no; they depend a great deal on tourist traffic—trippers.

22795. Is there any prospect of the line ever paying off the guarantee?—Absolutely no prospect, sir; because the line is gradually getting worse. The rails are getting worn out. Sleepers are renewed with unseasoned sleepers—native timber—excellent timber, no doubt, but unseasoned, and the rails are wearing out, and the rest of the line is always neglected, and in a short time they must reconstruct.

22796. What is the object of the Council asking you to come here and prove these facts before us?—Simply because they do not believe there is ever any prospect of that line paying a dividend on the shares from the profits.

22797. Well?—And they consider that the people who pay them never had any option in the matter. It was started on them and put on them by the Grand Jury, and they have no representation. They have one director on the Board nominated by the County, and they would rather like that they would be able to manage the line. The line is being run out of their pockets, and they would like to run it themselves.

22798. That is to say, the ratepayers think they are entitled to representation, so as to have some voice in the management, as they guarantee a portion of the

capital?—Yes; there is only one director, as compared with four. Of course, Dublin has one director too.

22799. There are four directors appointed by the shareholders?—Yes.

22800. And those four directors are shareholders of the concern guaranteed by the ratepayers?—Yes.

22801. Is that the point?—That it is worked out of the ratepayers' pockets.

22802. What?—It is practically worked out of the ratepayers' pockets.

22803. And I do not suppose that anybody would dispute the proposition that the ratepayers should have representation?—Yes; full representation.

22804. That is the point?—That is the particular point.

22805. Any other?—There are many other points. Nias No. 2 District Council say that the line is run badly; that the directors run another line; that is the Blessington and Poulaphuca line, and that it is not run for the benefit of the Blessington Tramway. It is rather an unpleasant point. The Tramway Company say that by keeping this line—the Blessington and Poulaphuca line—open, it brings them a bigger passenger traffic, and I quite feel that it does not hurt the Blessington and Poulaphuca line is not a guaranteed line, and they have no rolling stock—they have absolutely nothing. They could not work the line themselves, and they come to the Dublin and Blessington Company and say to them, practically—"If you do not keep our line open we will abandon the line," and then the Blessington Tramway Company kindly come in and give them a large rebate on the passenger fares.

22806. What is the result?—The result is a loss to the Dublin and Blessington line.

22807. What is the result to the subsidiary line?—They are able to pay a small dividend.

22808. They are?—About 2 per cent. now on the debenture shares.

22809. Lord Pirrie.—Not on the shares?—On the debenture stock.

22810. Chairman.—And you think the remedy is that the ratepayers who guarantee the capital should be the parties to manage the line?—Decidedly.

22811. Is fact that they should have full authority to manage the line?—Yes. In fact, under the Act the power of management is given. Under certain conditions they could have that power. If the working expenses for two consecutive years were paid by the county, the County Council could enter on the line and work it. But it is managed, very obviously managed, in such a way as to prevent that. The Directors do not want to give up the line to the county, and by permitting the line in one year, or one half-year, and working it up in another year, they steer clear of that.

22812. You mean that, that if a proper amount was spent on the line, to put it in proper order, and not allow it to deteriorate, as you point out, then the expenditure would be more than the receipts, and the county would have a remedy?—Yes.

Examined by Lord Pirrie.

22813. It must be two years running at a loss?—It must be two consecutive years. But the way they manage is that we have got a full half-year and a lean half-year; and they work that by paying something towards dividends out of the working one half-year and not calling for the full guaranteed dividend, and then the next half-year they do not pay anything from the proceeds of the working.

22814. I take it that you mean it is to be four consecutive half-years. Is that right?—Quite right.

22815. And if that takes place then the County Council can take charge of the line?—Yes.

22816. Now, I take it from your evidence to the Chairman that the County Council do not object to pay the guarantee, because they consider the line is a benefit to the county, but that they do want, and consider that they should have, the appointment of the directors?—Oh, yes; that is one grievance, and they also object strongly to the guarantee.

22817. But do they object to the guarantee provided they get the power of appointing the directors for the management of the line?—Well, I do not know what their feeling is on that point exactly.

22818. You do not consider that they could manage it so economically and well that they would be able to do without the guarantee, but you say that they consider that if they had the line in their own hands they would be able to manage it better and more

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. A. G. Gallagher, A.S. DISTRICT COUNCIL, County Kerry, Winklow.

Poulaphuca has worked by the Dublin and Blessington Company but the working arrangements regarded as unsatisfactory.

Transfer of Blessington line to County Council provided by the action of the existing board.

The appointment of the directors by the County Council as representatives of the guaranteeing area urged.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. R. G. Gallagher, M.P., 1807 C.E. County Wicklow, Wicklow.

Electrical instead of steam traction required.

The advent of the Blessington line for the encouragement of tourist traffic.

The annual levy on the Co. Dublin and the Co. Wicklow guaranteeing areas.

The advantage of the Foulisphuca line for tourist traffic.

The terms under which the Blessington Company work the Foulisphuca line less favourable to the latter.

Development of the granite industry.

economically than on the other system?—But I may as well say, for my own part, that so long as it is worked by steam power it will never pay. The gradients are heavy, and it is behind the times altogether, a steam-tram road.

28811. You mean the County Council prefer having it electric?—Oh, yes; nobody cares to travel on that train.

28810. And if it was handed over to the County Council would they lay out sufficient on that line to make it an electric tramway?—No, they have no power to do that.

28810. Then, there is no object. The County Council admit the line does good to the county?—They do. They say, as far as bringing tourists and people there is some advantage; and there are also, near Blessington, about half a mile from it, very good granite quarries, and up to this year the traffic from the quarries passed over the county roads in the form of horse traffic. Everything is brought to Dublin by horse rather than by railway.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Fox

28811. With regard to the guarantee; the amount for which you are liable is £1,500?—£5,000.

28812. But you get half back; you get 2 per cent. back?—Yes; 2 per cent.

28813. Your proportion is £1,200. And, as a matter of fact, what you have been called upon to pay for the last five years is £700, £600 to be accurate, and that is divided into a levy of 1d. on the County Dublin portion, and 6d. on the Wicklow?—It is very small for the Dublin district.

28814. It is a very small levy on the Dublin district?—Oh, yes; it has a larger area.

28815. That line between Blessington and Foulisphuca is only three or four miles long?—Four miles.

28816. And without that extension the tramway would not be able to continue as it is?—That is the contention.

28817. Is it not your experience that Foulisphuca is a great centre for tourist traffic?—Yes.

28818. And without it there would be very little traffic running between Dublin and Blessington?—Very little tourist traffic.

28819. So that it is absolutely essential that the Directors of the tramway keep that extension up if they want to get anything at all?—Yes; but the representatives of the people think that a bankrupt company that cannot work the line themselves, and otherwise must sacrifice their line, should not come to the Dublin and Blessington Tramway Company and dictate terms to them.

28820. Do you know what the capital of the extension tramway is?—I do not know.

28821. Do the shareholders receive any dividend?—The ordinary shareholders do not and I think it is about 2 per cent. they pay on the debenture stock. I am not certain.

28822. But the terms which are given to this extension company by the Dublin and Blessington people are, I think, on your own showing, very favourable?—To the Blessington and Foulisphuca line.

28823. By the Dublin and Blessington?—Oh, very favourable, because, roughly—I will not say the exact figure—at 10s. to bring down a wagon-load of material to Blessington. If it is brought on to Foulisphuca, four miles further, it is 12s. If they only bring it to Blessington the Dublin and Blessington people get the full 10s. If they bring it on to Foulisphuca they only get 6s. The Blessington and Foulisphuca gets the rest of it—about 6s.

28824. The Dublin and Blessington Tramway Company take the responsibility for the whole of the receipts and expenses?—Yes; and they divide the expenses into other proportions.

28825. They do not give them so much for the trip?—No.

28826. Or anything of that kind?—No. They give so much on the receipts.

28827. Mr. Sexton?—It is not divided by mileage?—No; not the rebate, but the cost of working is.

28828. Colonel Hutchinson Fox?—Is there any provision by the Dublin Tramway for taking heavy traffic, such as you speak of—this quarry industry?—Only last year they put up a few sidings, and they are carrying this granite to Dublin.

28829. To Dublin?—Yes.

28830. Is that likely to help the traffic?—Yes; it

would help the traffic greatly, and the quarries could be greatly developed if they were given favourable rates.

28831. Do you complain that the ratepayers who pay this guarantee have not a sufficient voice in the management of the railway?—Yes; that is the feeling.

28832. It rests entirely with themselves what rate they have, I suppose?—Well, they have only one man against four.

28833. But under the order in Council they are entitled to appoint so many for each barony?—There is only one barony practically represented in County Wicklow, and it was really by refusing to pay the guarantee that they got this one director on. That was before my time.

28834. I have not the Order in Council, but it seems very unusual if there is not provision made for the appointment of more than one where there are two counties involved.

28835. Mr. Sexton?—He means that Wicklow has one and Dublin has one?—Wicklow has one and Dublin has one, I only speak for Wicklow.

28836. Colonel Hutchinson Fox?—There is one for Dublin and one for Wicklow?—Yes.

28837. Can you give us any idea of what proportion of the receipts you say they are about £4,000 a year—representing passenger traffic, and how much represents goods traffic?—No, sir, I cannot. I have not gone into that.

28838. You cannot give it in round figures?—As far as I can recollect, it is about half-and-half.

28839. There is a carriage of goods traffic of £3,000 a year?—Yes.

28840. That is a considerable amount.

Examined by Mr. A. C. Brown.

28841. Mr. Gallagher, has this line got a goods station?—No, sir, they stop on the roadside.

28842. But about goods. What do they do with the quarry traffic?—They have a goods bank at Blessington.

28843. And what do they do at the Dublin end?—The Dublin end, I do not know. But it appears they have a goods station at Terenure, and I think they can unload there and carry it by carts through the city.

28844. Do they do it in the middle of the road, or do they load and unload at the station?—They have a yard at Terenure.

28845. At the Dublin end?—Yes. They have a goods yard and they can do it there.

28846. Can you tell me what the Dublin United Tramway Company's gauge is?—They are both 5 feet 3 inches nominally—the Irish gauge.

28847. You mean to say that the gauge is nominally the same?—Yes, but there is a difference.

28848. It is the old story that one has broader flanges to the wheels?—Yes.

28849. I thought from your proof that there was a difference in gauge?—Well, as they told me, but I could not see that. I have done some work for the Dublin Tramway.

28850. Chairman?—You said that on one or two occasions they did try to run?—Yes, but their wheels are too thick.

28851. Mr. A. C. Brown?—I understand you to say that there is £100,000 of capital in the Dublin and Blessington Tramway Company?—Yes.

28852. You do not say about Foulisphuca?—No; I know nothing about that.

28853. What happened to the money—do you know anything about it?—I presume it was used in the construction of the line.

28854. But surely it did not require £100,000 to make a railway fifteen miles long on the roadside?—I do not know, sir.

28855. Do you know what amount it represents paid up?—The amount of ordinary share capital was £87,000.

28856. You do not know the number of sovereigns the company received in return for issuing that amount of stock?—No, sir, I do not.

28857. Presumably it is not the same. Now, do you suggest that the line should be electrified?—It should, and if there is ever to be a chance of that line paying it must be by some other style of working, because no one travels over that line for pleasure after the first time.

28858. They run about four or five trains a day?—There do. They are very liberal that way.

28859. Could anyone expect an electric line to pay

there on the basis of five trains each way daily?—No, it would not pay at all. They could run shorter trains and more frequent trains.

28870. To Blessington?—To Blessington and every other place.

28871. Is there anything on the road that would pay for a frequent service?—The whole country is very charming from Blessington to Blessington, in fact on to Poulaphuca. The farther you go the more charming it gets. But there are no industries beyond the quarry, that I know of.

28872. There is something that would pay for what you would call a frequent service—a half-hourly service, or something of that kind, do you know?—No.

28873. And you think it possibly might be developed?—It could be developed, certainly, if the money could only be found for the electrification, it would pay.

28874. Are there any suburbs of Dublin growing very rapidly?—Well, Blessington is growing very rapidly; Tallaght is growing as well. And Blessington is not growing, because it is a great distance from the city, of course.

28875. Are there any suburbs some miles out growing enormously?—No; I cannot speak very well about Dublin.

28876. Just another point. Your suggestion, I understand, is particularly that the County Council should run the section that they pay for?—Yes, that is their feeling.

28877. And they have not instructed you to say what should happen the other piece of it—to Poulaphuca?—I have got no instruction on that, but simply on the Blessington Tramway Company, very bald instructions.

28878. It would not be to the public interest that Poulaphuca should be shut up?—I do not think so myself.

28879. Clearly, they would not want two people working it?—No.

28880. Do you think the County Council would like to work the tourist excursion traffic to Poulaphuca?—I am sure they would. They would do anything in the interests of their county.

28881. Does that mean that they would like to take over the extension?—I presume they would. They never gave me any hint that they would.

28882. Was there ever any suggestion that the Dublin United Tramways Company should take this up?—There was, not by the County Council, but there was a vague rumour that they would do so.

28883. There has not been an offer from the Tramway Company, that you know of?—No, not to the County.

28884. Would that be a good solution, in your opinion?—It would be one solution, and I think a very good solution, because the Dublin United Tramway Company have the rolling stock.

28885. And have the electricity?—Well, they could easily get power for this extension of only fifteen miles.

28886. They have got the power?—They have the power, and the matter would simply be the replacing of the rails, and in fact the relaying of the line, as you might expect, for the line was laid in the year 1855.

28887. Then, assuming some arrangement could be made financially, satisfactory to both sides, do you think your Council would be inclined to hand it over to the Tramway Company, or do you consider that they would like to have it in their own hands?—I think they would like to get rid of the expense of the Poulaphuca line, or the Blessington line at any rate. And I think they would take the easiest course out, and consider any reasonable offer that was made to them by the Tramway Company.

28888. They do not want it shut up?—They do not want to shut it up, because that would shut up one side of the county.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

28889. I gather from your evidence, and from what we have heard in other cases, that the provision enabling the Lord Lieutenant to give the management to the ratepayers can really always be made nugatory?—It can, and it is really made so in this case.

28890. The intention of the law is that in case of the expenses exceeding the receipts for two years consecutively, the ratepayers shall take direction of the enterprise?—Yes.

28891. And that provision, as a matter of fact, can be evaded by manipulating the first half-year?—Yes; by neglecting the line, and neglecting many important things during one half-year, the maintenance of the line, the re-sleeping and working of the line.

28892. It is a provision that "keeps the word of promise to the ear, and breaks it to the hope"?—Yes.

28893. Another provision is required?—A new provision, and in reference to that provision, it should be always remembered that the people who are actually paying the guarantee have had nothing to say to starting this line. It was the Grand Jury, when the people had no representation whatever.

28894. The year, at any rate, should be made the unit, and not the half-year?—Yes. I think if the people had more representation, I would not at first altogether take it over, but let them have a bigger representation on the Board of Directors of this line for a certain period, and then, if it was not satisfactory, let the County take it over.

28895. As to the difference as gauge between the Dublin Tramway line and your line. Though the gauge is nominally the same, there is a practical difference?—Yes, there is a difference in the construction.

28896. And that prevents interchange, even though there might be another cause to prevent it?—Well, yes; it prevents interchange, but it has been put before me in a conversation with a large trader, that even supposing they were able to run over the Dublin line, there would have to be provision made for unloading banks.

28897. My point is rather that if the vehicles cannot run on the Dublin line, nor the Dublin vehicles on that line, to discuss the want of running powers would be superfluous?—Oh, it would be superfluous.

28898. Now, you come here as the spokesman of the representative body which acts for the County Wicklow?—Yes, sir.

28899. And this guarantee which you refer to is a legacy from an unrepresentative body?—Yes.

28900. It was imposed on the County by an unrepresentative body that has ceased to have any power?—Yes, the Grand Jury.

28901. There is a curious difference between the weight of the burden on Dublin and Wicklow. Each guarantees half?—Yes; and the County Wicklow portion really serves the greater part of Kildare. It runs along the county boundary.

28902. The guaranteeing area of Wicklow is paying three times as much in the pound as that of Dublin. The poundage levied in Dublin is only one-third of what is paid in Wicklow?—Yes, it is so much less, and the guaranteeing is so much more.

28903. Is this a useful line?—It is a useful line to a certain extent. It brings people into the county.

28904. And it brings people into the capital. It brings country people into town?—Yes, it does.

28905. And is it valuable as a goods line?—Fairly valuable. It is valuable in that way, that it is a long, heavy pull to bring goods out by road. Unfortunately there are no goods to be brought from the county bearing the granite, as far as I know.

28906. Apart from any question of levying or guaranteeing does the utility of this line justify its existence?—Oh, it does, in opening up one side of the County Wicklow. On the wall map there you can see that it comes practically between the Great Southern and the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford lines, between the mountains, running down the course of the county. You see it is a very useful line in that way. It can be fed from both sides.

28907. So that if transit were regarded as a public or national, and not as a local question, there can be no doubt that this line ought to be made and maintained?—Yes, and extended.

28908. Chairman—Extended to what point?—There was one party proposed to extend it to the Seven Churches, but I do not think much of that.

[Refuses to discuss question on map.]

28909. Mr. Sexton—It could be made more remunerative by extension?—It could by running a feeder up to those granite industries which are really kept alive by the existence of one man, Mr. Osborne, who keeps them alive and works them at great disadvantage. And then the military traffic is considerable to certain camps. There is one near the County Dublin, down at Kilsbide, and I dare say if you had a short feeding line there, a short feeder to that, it would

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. S. G. Gallagher, M.P. for Co. Wicklow, County Surveyor, Wicklow.

The provision for the taking over of the line by the County Council rendered nugatory by the action of the directors.

Larger representation of the ratepayers on the Board of Directors of the Blessington line urged.

The impossibility of exercising running powers over the Dublin United Tramway Co.

Complaint that the Wicklow ratepayers pay an excessive proportion of the guarantee.

The utility of the line alleged to fully justify its existence as a public convenience.

Some small extensions of the Blessington line proposed.

Oct. 15, 1907

Mr S. G. Gallagher, M.P. (Dublin County) Wexford.

The financial position of the Dublin and Blessington line.

Constitution of the board.

pay for itself. And a lot of the traffic that is carried by various means to the camp could be brought over this line.

28909. It rather appears then that if the railways were operated as one public system, a line like this, by a moderate expenditure, could be made a thriving line?—Oh, yes, and it would make it possible to go round Wicklow.

28910. Take the financial position. There is an ordinary capital raised of £50,000 which cannot get a penny of dividend till the ratepayers of Dublin and Wicklow have got back all they had paid?—Yes.

28911. And I think we may say that that ordinary capital has no chance?—Oh, absolutely no chance.

28912. The ordinary shareholders may have an abstract interest in the line but not a practical interest?—Yes.

28913. Is it the ordinary shareholders that elect the directors?—I really do not know. I do not know how that part of it is managed. I don't suppose any ordinary shareholder wastes his time turning up at the meetings.

28914. The ordinary shareholders who have no interest in the line under the present conditions?—No.

28915. The ordinary shareholders have no interest, because their dividend is secured?—The preference shareholders are all paid.

28916. The shareholders—ordinary, or preference, or both—elect the directors?—Yes.

28917. The line provides one part of the dividend, the Treasury another part, and the counties another part?—Yes.

28918. And neither the Exchequer nor the counties have any representation?—No, beyond the one director from the County Wexford and one from the County Dublin.

28919. I mean no effective representation?—Yes, sir.

United in agreement of the Irish railway would result in the efficient working of this and all other similar lines.

28920. Now, taking things as they are, do you believe, Mr. Gallagher, that if the income were allowed to elect a majority of that board they could under the very unpromising conditions which you have described, make any considerable change in the state of affairs?—Well, I fancy they could in some ways, but that is a matter which would have to be gone into by a person more intimate with railway work than I am. There might be economies in certain departments, but, as far as I see among the officials, every one seems to be doing his best on that line.

28921. Here is a useful line, in a sense an indispensable line, a line which by extension could be made valuable; but we have the road bed worn out, no

means of replacing the rolling stock, and the rails requiring renewal?—In the immediate future.

28922. Is not that a wretched state of affairs?—It is, sir. Of course it could be said that I, as County Surveyor, have certain powers, I inspect the line, and I point out these things, and if they are not done by the company I can enter on the line and do it at the expense of the company, but I do not see any way to do that, because it is really at the expense of the ratepayers.

28923. Does the existence of such a state of affairs on the threshold of the capital city of Ireland indicate some radical misconception on the part of those handling public affairs of the relation between the transport question and the public interest?—Decidedly there is something wrong.

28924. There is something very wrong. Do you say that this case and cases like this would be efficiently dealt with if the railways were operated as one system, and that lines of this class, provided that their existence was justified by the public interest, should be borne upon the budget of a general railway system and not by local ratepayers?—Yes; it points to that.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON FOR.

28925. Might I just ask one question to clear up that point. I think that you said when you spoke of that particular provision as to the County Councils acquiring railways, that it applied to your line?—Yes.

28926. That provision does not apply to yours at all. That only applies to a case where there is a deficit in the working expenses in each of four successive half-years?—Yes.

28927. And there has been no deficit. The receipts on that line have always covered the expenses, and more than covered them. There is really a profit on this line of £700?—But then I may point out that in one half-year there is—

28928. Not of expenses?—There is; because out of the profits on the line there would have to be certain repairs, which are neglected in one half-year.

28929. Expenses?—Of course in all railways there is a lean and a fat half-year?—Oh, yes; and I have pointed out that by neglecting the work one year we are able to carry it out the next year.

28930. Colonel Hutchinson FOR.—But, when the balance-sheet shows a profit of £200, is it not very unreasonable to assume that there is a deficit?—You see, the County Council have to pay for the same line.

28931. They need to pay half?—But still there is a natural tendency amongst all people to have a run for their money at any rate.

28932. I only wanted to make that point clear.

Mr P. J. MANNION examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. P. J. Mannion, Representative of the Dublin Urban District Council.

28933. I think you appear on behalf of the Castlebar Urban Council?—I do.

28934. Have you been deputed by that Council to give evidence?—Yes. I may mention, sir, that there are a few points that I wish to have embodied in the abstract that I omitted.

28935. We will see directly what they are. First of all, I think you have got some remarks to make with reference to the rate for fruit from Liverpool to Castlebar?—Yes.

28936. What do you say?—The through rate is 30s a ton. The shipping company's charge is 8s. 5d. per ton, and the Midland Railway Company gets 8s. 7d., their proportion. This 30s. rate applies to all fruit, such as apples, oranges, grapes, etc. Take the existing rates in the same class of goods from Dublin to Castlebar. Apples come under class 1, and are charged 24s. 11d.; oranges come under class 2, and cost 27s. 10d.; grapes class 3, and cost 35s. 7d. To this, for commission, add 2s. 5d.

28937. Oranges?—Are you certain that the 35s. per ton from Liverpool applies to grapes?—Yes.

28938. Are you sure of that?—Yes; I have it here.

28939. All right; go on?—To this, for commission, add 8s. 5d., the rate from Liverpool to Dublin, and we have apples at 35s. 4s., oranges at 35s. 2s., and grapes at 40s., as against 30s. from Liverpool. Mixed consignments from Dublin, being consigned under separate bonds, very often brings each item within the operation of the scale rate, which adds something like twenty per cent. more to the already exorbitant

figures, while, if the same goods are sent from Liverpool they are all carried at the same rate, which is much below the lowest in operation between Dublin and Castlebar; or, in other words, the Dublin merchant is handicapped by about 8s. per ton.

28940. Dublin does not produce these articles?—No, sir, but it has the effect of making Liverpool, not Dublin, the port.

28941. You think, if the rates were lower from Dublin, instead of Liverpool being the import place for all this foreign traffic, that it might come in directly to Dublin?—I do. That is my contention.

28942. Mr. Sexton?—Dublin is injured as a distributive point?—Is injured, and seriously so.

28943. Oranges?—I think you want to make some remark with reference to the small parcels scale. At present you are aware, I suppose, that the small parcels are considered as such if under three cwt.?—Yes.

28944. What have you got to say about that?—I say the proportion—the extra charge for smalls under three cwt. is entirely too high—about twenty-five per cent.

28945. You must give the reasons for thinking so. First of all, you would contend that the trade in this country—in Ireland—is of a retail character?—Very small.

28946. Very small, and therefore you think that the small parcels scale, being fixed at three cwt., is too high?—Yes, sir; I say the minimum ought to be one cwt.

23940. Instead of three cwt. it ought to be one cwt. ?—Yes, one cwt.

23947. And that would be a great advantage to small traders?—Decidedly.

23948. With reference to the classification of goods generally in the Clearing House classification, what have you got to say about that?—It is very complicated. For instance, the owners' risk rate for confectionery and drysaltery—

23949. We are speaking of the classification, not the rates. They are two different things. I understand you to refer to the classification of goods?—Well, what I mean by that is—it is complicated. It is very difficult to understand. The case I refer to is confectionery and drysaltery—owners' risk rate—of 21s. 8d. per ton.

23950. One minute. I do not want you to confuse two different things. In your proof you refer to the classification of goods as being complicated and unsatisfactory. Never mind rates. Leave them alone for the present. You give as a reason that it is so complicated, that you cannot understand it—what it requires an expert railway official to understand what it means. Have you ever seen the railway classification?—I have.

23951. I should have thought it was simplicity itself?—There is one classification, of drysaltery, that is very vague. If a consignment is sent as groceries the rate is very much higher than if consigned as confectionery or drysaltery, which comprises groceries.

23952. We should not consider that groceries come under the denomination of drysaltery. At any rate, all those articles are set forth in the classification—all the articles comprised as groceries are separately mentioned—sugar, tea, coffee, and so forth—all separately mentioned in the classification?—That is an instance I have given.

23953. Now you mentioned the rate, what is the trouble about the rate?—The owner's risk rate for drysaltery and confectionery is 21s. 8d. per ton from Dublin to Castlebar. If drysaltery and confectionery are carried at company's risk the rate is 34s. 11d. for confectionery and 36s. 7d. for drysaltery. It is puzzling to me, if they are both carried at the same rate at owner's risk, why they should not be also carried at the same rate at company's risk.

23954. That does seem strange to me. Can you give any instance?—Yes.

23955. Just give the figures. Take them separately?—This is a statement of rates I have had from the Midland Great Western Railway. Confectionery in boxes, cases, or casks, 34s. 11d.

23956. What risk?—Company's risk. Drysaltery in casks, barrels, boxes, or hampers, 36s. 7d. Confectionery (common) in casks, 21s. 8d.; drysaltery, 21s. 8d. at owner's risk.

23957. Yes, but you say there is one condition of carriage?—Confectionery in boxes, cases, and casks, and confectionery in casks.

23958. It says "confectionery (common)." That seems to be the distinction. I do not know what it means. It says "confectionery (common)" in casks 21s. 8d., and drysaltery, 21s. 8d., both owner's risk?—And it continues, raising the same casks that are carried at owner's risk are charged the higher rate.

23959. The Midland Great Western Railway Company will carry the confectionery at 34s. 11d. per ton, company's risk, drysaltery in casks, barrels, boxes, and hampers at 36s. 7d. per ton, whereas confectionery (common) in casks is 21s. 8d. and drysaltery in casks is 21s. 8d. per ton, both the same, at owner's risk rate. What is the date of that?—12th April, 1907.

23960. Well, now, have you any complaints with reference to the way in which the railway traffic generally is dealt with in your district, independent of rates—the general working?—The conditions are very much improved to what they were a few years ago. Sometime in 1904 I remember we did not have our goods that would be raised on Tuesday till the Thursday morning following—two days.

23961. From Dublin?—From Dublin. I wrote to the managers of the Midland Company and also reported the matter in some local papers, with the result that after a year and a half we had the system changed, and now we have them every morning, and there is nothing to complain of.

23962. That is to say, in 1904 you complained, and in eighteen months' time there was a remedy, and at

present it is satisfactory?—In that way it is satisfactory.

23963. With regard to the amalgamation of railways, or the purchase of railways by the State, are you in favour, generally, of that course being adopted?—Yes, sir. The Council of which I happen to be a member were unanimous in passing a resolution to that effect.

23964. Were they of opinion that the control should be an Irish authority?—They were, sir.

23965. In other words, State purchase with Irish popular control?—Quite so. I beg your pardon—not State purchase, but amalgamation, and management under popular control.

23966. Who is to purchase—the Irish authority?—My contention is that if the shareholders who now run the Irish railways could be induced to leave their money invested in the amalgamated concern, I say that the Government, by way of securing their interests, should step in and guarantee the minimum dividend.

23967. What Government?—The British Government.

23968. That is what I say. You say the British Government should guarantee the existing shareholders a certain rate of interest, as arranged, for each company. Is that what you mean?—Quite so.

23969. And then control to be in an authority established in Ireland—an Irish authority?—And vested in an Irish authority.

23970. You think that such an arrangement would enable considerable savings to be effected in the working of the railways, and that such savings should go to the benefit of the country?—Quite so, sir.

23971. In the reduction of rates?—Yes, and development of the districts.

23972. Developing undeveloped districts?—Yes.

23973. Strictly speaking, and briefly, those are the views of your Council?—They are, sir.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

23974. You come here from the local authority of the county town of Mayo?—Yes.

23975. Do you object to the classification of goods into eight classes?—I do.

23976. Do you say that there are goods in one class that ought to be in another?—I do, sir.

23977. And you think that the classification into eight classes ought to be revised?—I think there would be quite sufficient.

23978. Do you think the effect of the present classification is so to classify some goods as to make the rates too high?—Yes.

23979. What is the explanation of the fact that consignments of mixed goods in your trade from Liverpool can be taken as one consignment and brought under the tonnage rate whilst if the same goods are despatched from Dublin they are broken up into different lots and brought within the very high and onerous scale rate?—It shows the preference given by the Irish railways to the exports in England.

23980. It shows that Dublin has not the slightest chance as against any English centre of becoming a distributing point for such import trade?—Yes. Of course, under the present circumstances, there is every inducement to traders to send their money to England.

23981. Dublin is extirpated as a distributing point?—We cannot buy in Dublin.

23982. Do you think that the extent to which Irish trade is carried on in small parcels shows how wrong it is to assume that an arrangement to fix a wealthy country like England, with a large trade, must necessarily be adapted for Ireland also?—It is very foolish to assume that.

23983. Ireland requires a different arrangement in certain matters, and this is one of them?—Yes.

23984. What do you say, generally, is the effect of these low import rates from England, as contrasted with the high inland rates in Ireland, has it not contributed to suppress manufactures and industries in this country?—It has, sir, of course. We have to send our money into Liverpool instead of Dublin, which makes Liverpool the port for Irish trade.

23985. It pays wages to people outside this country instead of wages to people in it?—Yes.

23986. Has this promoted emigration?—Decidedly, it must have.

Oct. 15, 1907

Mr. P. J. Munnion, Representative of the Cashel Urban District Council.

Resolution by the Council favouring amalgamation of the railways and control by an Irish authority.

Proposed revision of the classification of goods.

The system of granting preferential rates to imports considered.

Suggested arrangement of treatment of Irish trade in small parcels.

Superior effect of low import rates on the prosperity of Ireland.

Oct. 14, 1947

Mr. P. J. Magnuson, Representative of the Chautauque Urban District.

The existing rates have capped Irish produce in the Nagfah markets.

28887. What is the cause of emigration—is it that the people have no means of being at home?—The people have no means of living.

28068 Can Ireland be anything but a dead-and-alive country as long as it is dependent upon the land alone?—It cannot; we must have industries to make it self-supporting.

38890. On the other hand, the low rates from the Continent into England on food products, contrasted with the comparatively high export rates from Ireland—have they hampered and hindered the development of Irish agriculture?—Of course they have. Pork from Cheshire to London, at through owner's risk rate, is charged 25 £/c. a ton. We consider that entirely too high.

28860. Then, unless we are able to revise these rates, to lower them to suit the needs of Ireland, Ireland cannot develop her agricultural industry, and she must remain destitute of manufacturing industry.—Yes.

288901. The people have been reduced from eight millions to four millions in the course of the railway era, so there are only half as many people to carry, and half as many to feed and clothe, and the result must be a decline of railway profits!—With a declining population the railway companies must decrease their dividends, and their dividends must disappear altogether in the end.

38902 Would persistence, then, in this present railway policy mean a black future for the railways as well as for the country?—In the railway companies' interest alone it would be, to my mind, good policy to reduce the rates, particularly the passenger rates.

299933—About the solution. An Irish grievance of such magnitude and depth requires an Irish authority to cure it.—Yes

28994—You must have a sympathetic authority, knowing the country, and having the confidence of the people?—Certainly; it must be within, and act for the country.

39395. As to finance, do you think that we are entitled to a set-off from England on the ground of prepayment? Undoubtedly we are, because of the share of the Royal Commission appointed by the Liberal Government, in 1893, to inquire into the financial relations between the two countries. The lowest estimate made by any of the Commissioners was that this country was, and still continued, paying two and a quarter millions annually in overtaxation since 1893, or in other words, that England now owes this country something like one hundred and twenty millions.

239996. Then, if the question of restitution for the past were not pressed, do you think that the over-labouring still from year to year would entitle us to expect that England should take responsibility for some portion of the capital required to finance the railways?—Yes, certainly.

23997. Do you think that if the Treasury, apart from restitution or set-off, were to lend the money, there would be an indefeasible security in the railways and in the rates of the country?—*Ample security.*

38996 And even if the Treasury would not lend would you say that Ireland herself, through her County Councils or other authority would accept responsibility for the financing of the system?—They would, undoubtedly; they could go into the open market and because the money on the accounts of the other

38960. Considering how hard, and how far, Ireland has been driven by this system, do you think that if she offers Great Britain to accept the responsibility of ownership of the lines, she is making a claim to which there can be no just reply but assent?—She is, undoubtedly.

Examined by Mr. A. W. W. W.

25000 You desire, and I quite understand, that Dublin should be the distributing centre rather than Liverpool?—I believe if we had the same transit facilities from Dublin as from Liverpool that the Dublin merchants would be in a position to import the goods for themselves.

1991. That is what I understand. I am not quarrelling in the least. You take the instance of fruit. Take oranges. They come in shiploads from one to two places. Barcelona and so on. Do you think Dublin could take shiploads? Is it a big enough market to deal with shiploads? I think it is

29032. Liverpool has got six or seven millions of people behind it in Lancashire?—Yes, I quite understand.

26603. Do not you think that Liverpool has got a natural advantage?—I believe the trade in Ireland is sufficient to warrant heavy consignments coming into Dublin, not as heavy as into Liverpool, but heavy enough for the Irish trade if the railway companies cut them half way.

29004. Do you think the orange trade would take 2,000 ton steamers.

290044. *Chrysomelae*.—Oranges come in small vessels

29095 Mr. Ascroft.—Do you think they could I should like to know?—My contention is that if the railway companies gave facilities to the Irish traders, that Dublin would be, as a matter of course, able to import oranges direct and distribute them all over Ireland.

29006. You think they could afford to take a ship-load?—It can afford to take a shipload.

29007. All right, on the question of smalls have you ever thought of it from the railway company's point of view?—Whether a consignment is large or small it wants the same checking and all the different expenses connected with it—I should think that it is as easy to manage the checking of 1 cwt. as of 5 cwt.

20008. But, supposing the 5 cwt. comes in one lot, there is one invoice, and, supposing it comes in three lots, there are three invoices?—Yes.

20000. That is all more trouble. I won't carry you in detail, but you will agree that the railway company has more expense in dealing with twenty separate hundred-weights than with one ton!—Yes, but the percentage is too high.

28010. You think that from your own point of view the percentage is too high?—Twenty-five per cent.

28011. Do you know that the railway companies, not in this case only, maintain that it is the law? Would you take it from me that there is no country in the world where there is so little difference between the rates for small consignments and the rates for big consignments as there is here?—I am not aware.

29012 I think it is true—I know it is a guarantee
in this country.

20013. I quite follow?—Because you cannot compare Ireland with a prosperous country like England. Most of the traders are in a small way, and I am sure that about fifty per cent. of the money they leave out with the railway companies is for small consignments, and that is twenty-five per cent. extra.

29014 I quite follow your point of view. I only asked you to see there is another side. Another question. You spoke about classification and you have said it seems, in many ways, not very good. Do you know it is practically forced on the committee by Act of Parliament?—I believe that.

39015 Where you speak about drydredry and confectiory it looked very unreasonable, and I looked and found that the Act of Parliament says confectiory in barrels is to be in Class 2, drydredry in barrels is to be in Class 3, so that the Act of Parliament said it should be higher, or that confectiory should be charged lower?—What puzzles me is why there are the same at owner's risk.

29016 There the companies have departed from the Act of Parliament and make a concession.

Mr. Croker Harrington, Solicitor.—They made a concession, why, I do not know, but they have.

29016a. Mr. *Arnooth*.—They made a comparison by putting both in the lower class. When the company takes the risk the rate by Act of Parliament is higher for drysaltery in casks than for confectionery in casks.—There is a difference of 14s. per ton, which seems very high.

20017. Mr. Serres.—The fact that there is something in an Act of Parliament does not close the matter, because we are inquiring into what ought to be.

29017a, *Mr. Newirth*.—That is why it looks peculiar

29018, Chairman—He says that at owner's risk they are the same rate, and at company's risk they are different. I think he is quite right in pointing it out.

28018a. Mr. Ascroft.—When the railway companies take their own risk they take a reasonable course, but in the other case they have to do what looks unreasonable, owing to the Act of Parliament!—The general course is to get the goods sent at company's risk.

A complete
alteration in
the present
railway policy
is regarded
as
necessary.

The control of the railways by a syndicate of Irish landlords recommended

The claim of Ireland in respect of over-taxation might be a reason for English financial support in securing the Irish Free.

The capacity of Ireland to finance a system of State owned railways from purely Irish resources

The possibility of greatly increasing the importance of Dublin as a distributing centre.

- 29019 Is it in your trade?—Yes.
- 29020 You really use company's risk?—I do not use it; I use the owner's risk.
- 29021 A great many use company's risk?—The ordinary rate.
- 29022 Just one other point. We had here yesterday Mr. Munro, the Chairman of your County Council of Galway, and he was speaking about one of the guaranteed lines, the Loughrea and Attymon, and he said it was natural that the ratepayers should object to the present position, and that in his opinion the party who pays the pipes should call the tune—do you agree?—Yes.
- 29023 Everyone would. Is it reasonable to say that the Irish authority should manage the railways and the British Treasury should guarantee the money?—I should think that the British Treasury owes us the money.
- 29024 Then you would say give it outright?—No, but I think the very smallest concession we would expect would be to guarantee the minimum dividend paid for the last five or ten years, because in the matter of that kind it would be a case of heads they win and tails we lose.
- 29025 Putting out of the question this three railroads, or two and three-quarter railroads, that the Financial Relations Commission say was due, assuming all obligations were wiped out, and that we were on a fair basis, assuming we are agreed on that, would you then say it would be reasonable that the Irish authority should call the tune that the British Treasury should guarantee?—Yes.
- 29026 Under these conditions?—Under the circumstances, and that this country is tied to England, I really think that she ought to say that, seeing the population has diminished so much for the fifty years—
- 29027 That is rather asking a favour than justice?—My point is that it would not be even justice to ask them to guarantee the shareholders' interest in the way of dividend.
- 29028 You are speaking of what you think is due?—What I think is due.
- 29029 Supposing we had settled that, and wiped it out, and started fair, would you then think it reasonable that the United Kingdom should be asked to guarantee, and that the Irish authority should have the whole control?—I should think England is morally bound to see that this country does not go down and become bankrupt.
- 29030 Ought not England to have a voice in saying what reductions on the present rate should be made?—I would have no objection to her having a voice in the management. I would not think that they should have the sole control.
- 29031 You would agree that if England guarantees the money she should have a voice in the management?—I would, sir.
- 29032 Mr. Streen—You would prefer Ireland should take the responsibility and have the management?—I would.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON FOSCO.

- 29033 With regard to the railway classification, you are aware that that was the result of a very

prolonged inquiry by the Board of Trade, lasting over two or three years, and that the schedule which they drew up was confirmed by Act of Parliament in 1861 or 1862, that it was not adopted hap-hazard, but was the result of careful inquiry, and, though in some cases the rates seem high, are you aware that 75 per cent. of the traffic in this country—I believe in the United Kingdom—is carried at exceptional rates, rates, that is to say, which are considerably lower than the standard rates?—The standard rates.

29034 The standard rates are the classification rates, and 75 per cent. of all the traffic is carried below the classification rate?—I did not think the railway companies were so indulgent.

29035 With regard to the rates themselves, you are aware that several alternative methods of fixing rates have been suggested from time to time—uniform rate per ton mile, and rates based on cost of service and so forth, and that every one of these have been, sooner or later, abandoned for the present system, which is rates fixed on the principle of "what the traffic can bear"? Do you know that this system is adopted practically without exception, or perhaps with some slight modification, by all the railway companies in Europe, State-owned and otherwise?—I believe the system is the same.

29036 And that it is considered by those who are competent to give an opinion, that any other system, instead of decreasing the anomalies which at present exist, would really add to and result in greater anomalies than those of which you complain. I think you will find that that is the case. Then with regard to the guarantee, I gather that if the Treasury gave something in the nature of a subsidy, you consider that it should have a voice in the rates and charges that should be fixed on the unified system; not only a voice in the general administration, but also have some consultative voice as to any reductions which are desirable, and which would be made in the interests of the general community?—I consider that the rates should be made by Irish authorities, and that the railways in this country would not be expected to pay—that they should not be run as a paying concern—I mean to say a big dividend.

29037 I will put an extreme point. Supposing the Irish authority fixes a rate at such a low figure that it would be impossible to make any profit at all, it would be unreasonable that the State should, in those circumstances, guarantee the same rate of dividend as the shareholders are at present enjoying, when there would be an earthly probability of the railways being able to earn anything approaching it?—Of course I would be quite agreeable to have the Government have a voice in the scheduling to safeguard the Treasury.

29038 You could not leave the whole thing to the Irish authorities, if the State were to find the money; they should have some voice in fixing the rate?—Yes, but I have sufficient confidence in the Irish authority that they would not be so blind—

29039 Still, we are all human, and of course the natural desire is to make the rate as low as possible, you would not object?—No, sir.

Mr. MICHAEL TIERNEY examined by the CHAIRMAN.

- 29040 I think you appear on behalf of Ennis Urban Council?—Yes.
- 29041 Are you the Vice-Chairman of the Council?—I am.
- 29042 Where is Ennis?—County Clare.
- 29043 Is that an important centre?—Yes, it is. It is the capital of the County Clare.
- 29044 You represent an agricultural district?—Yes, the county is agricultural.
- 29045 And the produce of the land, in one form or another, is it consumed or exported?—Most of it is exported.
- 29046 Sent away?—Yes, sent to England.
- 29047 How is it sent?—By rail.
- 29048 What company?—The most of it goes by the Great Southern, and a good deal of cattle go by the Midland.
- 29049 Cattle by the Midland and produce by the Great Southern?—I say the most goes by the Great Southern, but some cattle go by the Midland.

29050 That is cattle for the different parts of Ireland?—Yes, up to Meath and those places.

29051 Well now, are the people in your district, your Council, satisfied with the traffic arrangements?—No, they are not.

29052 Why?—For several reasons. The Urban Council passed resolution after resolution calling upon the authorities to improve the station at Ennis, and we have been met with a blank refusal. The accommodation at the southern side is fairly good.

29053 You are giving reasons why the people are dissatisfied with the railway arrangements?—Yes.

29054 What is the first reason?—The first reason is that the storage accommodation is inadequate at Ennis itself.

29055 There is no goods warehouse?—There is a goods warehouse, but everything is jammed together.

29056 It is not large enough for the trade?—It is not large enough for the trade.

Oct. 15, 1907

Mr. P. J. Manning, Representative of the Castlebar Urban District Council.

The existing Railway Classification of Goods the outcome of careful inquiry.

75 per cent. of the goods traffic of the United Kingdom carried at exceptional rates.

The justice of the Government having a voice in the fixing of rates if financially involved in a purchase scheme.

Mr. Michael Tierney, Representative of the Ennis Urban District Council.

Complained as to inadequate provision at Ennis station for dealing with traffic.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. Michael
Turner,
Representative
of the
Black Urban
District
Council.

Refusal of the
railway com-
pany to
improve the
accommoda-
tion at Ennis
station.

Complaint as
to
preferential
treatment of
one firm in
the matter of
storage accom-
modation at
Ennis station.

Complaint as
to treatment
of cattle at
Ennis station.

29055 Of course you represented that to the railway companies?—I have got a copy of a resolution we sent to the railway company.

29057 What was the date?—The date is about twelve months ago.

29058 That was a resolution passed by the Council and sent to the railway company?—Yes.

29059 Have you got the answer?—They did not give an answer in writing, but met the deputation at Ennis Railway Station, and refused to do anything at all—refused to take the recommendation into consideration.

29060 Did they give no reason?—They simply said that things were in the same way for years, and they did not see why they were not good enough now.

29061 That the property had been in existence, and they did not see any reason why alteration should be made?—Yes.

29062 You, on your part, gave reasons why there should be more accommodation?—Yes.

29063 Is the trade increasing?—No, it is not.

29064 Then that would rather point to the fact that the additional accommodation is not required?—There is one cause of complaint, that they have two stores, and one of those stores is left altogether to one firm—to Messrs. Barnatyns—they use it as a place for distributing their flour. I do not know what arrangements they have, but the whole town has only the other store.

29065 I suppose the present tenant of that store—does he live at Ennis?—He lives at Limerick. He is a miller in Limerick, and he sends his flour up there and distributes it round the country.

29066 Very well, that is about the accommodation at the station. Are there any other reasons given?—There is another reason, people are complaining. As you go into the goods store there is a very high bridge going into the present goods store. It is a very steep bridge. It is almost impossible to bring anything like a decent load out of the store on account of the high bridge.

29067 What is the bridge over?—It is over the railway. That is between the goods store and Ennis.

29068 It is a road bridge, and it is difficult to take vehicles over it?—It is difficult to bring a big load over it.

29069 The load is limited for the horse?—Yes.

29070 How do you suggest that that could be remedied?—We wanted them to use the platform on the other side that is in the hands of Messrs. Barnatyns and refuse that for the public, and they could cross the bridge and could transfer Messrs. Barnatyns to the other side.

29071 In other words, if this warehouse or store, which is let, were used for the general public, you could get the traffic without going over the bridge?—Exactly.

29072 Have you represented that to the railway company?—We did.

29073 What did they say?—They said that bridge was there for years and they did not see—

29074 The same answer?—I may point out that at the time this store was built that bridge was not there at all, because the railway did not extend beyond Ennis.

29075 Have you any complaints with reference to the railway cattle traffic?—There have been complaints at the Midland side, they have only two open pens, and it is almost impossible to load them at the Midland side, and I have heard people frequently complain that they cannot get wagons from the railway at Ennis to send on the cattle by the Midland, because they want them to go by the Southern.

29076 I believe there is some agitation going on just now in connection with it?—There was to be a public meeting last January, but on account of this Commission the thing fell through.

29077 Is it in contemplation to have a public meeting in connection with this railway matter?—It is not, pending the result of this Commission.

29078 Your principal grievance appears to be that this store is let to a Limerick man?—That is one grievance.

Mr. Charles Berrington, Solicitor.—The old Locomotive Shed, which never was a store, was let to Messrs. Barnatyns, of Limerick.

29079a Chairman.—It seems to be a grievance.

Mr. Charles Berrington, Solicitor.—It relieved the store and took a great deal of goods out of the goods

store. The company have spent very large sums on this station; principally on cattle accommodation, and I think you would agree if you were asked to look at the place. We think it is a very good station for the traffic. If any member of the Commission is in the direction we would like him to see the station.

29079 Chairman.—You heard what Mr. Barnatyns said?—I represent the town and the people, and they do not agree with what he says.

29080 Do you agree that the cattle accommodation has been improved?—Yes, it has.

29081 That was what Mr. Barnatyns said. He said they spent money on the improvement of the cattle accommodation?—We have not made any complaints of the cattle accommodation on that side.

29082 Very well. Any question about rates. I suppose you have not made that a study?—I have only been told that the people can send goods or cattle traffic from Gort down past Ennis and from Limerick cheaper than the Ennis people can, and on the other hand I have been told that people can bring cattle by Limerick to Broadstone cheaper than the people of Ennis can.

29083 You have no facts or figures within your own knowledge?—Not within my own personal knowledge, it is quite admitted.

29084 According to what you say, and the opinion of your Council, you do not think the railways are doing all that they can to foster the interests of the town?—No, I do not think so.

29085 And that you think a good deal more might be done?—A good deal more might be done.

29086 Is that opinion with reference to the Great Southern or the Midland?—It will be with reference to both. Of course you cannot expect much from the Midland, because they have only running powers there.

29087 And they use the Great Southern Station?—Yes.

29088 Your complaint is against the owning Company, the Great Southern?—Yes.

29089 What about the West Clare Railway, have you any connection with it?—Yes, the West Clare comes into Ennis, too.

29090 What have you got to say about that railway—it is one of the guaranteed lines where the railways guarantee part of the interest?—As regards the West Clare Railway, I should say it is simply a case of taxation without representation. The railways have to contribute a very large sum annually to cover the guaranteed dividend and deficit in the working expenses, and have practically nothing to do as regards the management of line, which is left to all intents and purposes, in the hands of some gentlemen in Dublin who review operations at the Gold Lark Hotel a couple of times in the year, and never see the line except on these occasions. They are useless as far as working the line is concerned, except to draw their fees. The Chairman, I believe, is an octogenarian. I have no doubt if this line was in the hands of an ordinary company of shareholders it would become a paying concern, and the railways would be relieved of a burden which they have been labouring under for years.

29091 You think the directors should be selected from those who guarantee the interest and the capital?—Certainly.

29092 From the railways?—Yes.

29093 Do you know what is the amount in the pound they pay?—I do not know what they pay, I did not go into the figures because I believe you have had evidence.

29094 You agree with the evidence that has been given?—I do.

29095 We have had considerable evidence?—Further on you will find I am referring to the tourist traffic in the West Clare district. Clare would be a very good tourist country if it were properly developed, and I am sure a lot of money would be brought into the county, but on account of the railway people do not care to come to the West because it takes too long from Ennis to Killybeg, nearly four hours, three and a half to four hours, a distance of forty-three miles, and the people that travel long distances do not care to go by the West Clare Railway on that account. The West Clare, as I point out, was very badly constructed at the beginning. At the time it was put down they cut down forest trees, and they cut them up without any preparation at all and used them for sleepers.

29096. *Lord Pirrie*.—Used what?—The tops of the trees.

29097. *Chairman*.—Perhaps that is the reason that they cannot run quick?—I think so, because the railway is in a bad way. I walked over several parts of the line myself.

29098. You think, in the hands of capable management and directors, interested in the guarantee, that a considerable improvement might be made in the working of the railway?—It would certainly, if they got the line given over in good form at the beginning.

29099. They would have to do that, I suppose?—What I was saying about the permanent way is that it is laid from the beginning. I walked over it lately, several parts of it, and the sleepers are slanting as the train goes by, the slush gushes out from under the sleepers. The sleepers are loose under the line.

29100. I suppose that is only in the wet weather?—It is very badly damaged.

29101. *Mr. Burton*.—They sank under your feet?—Yes.

29102. *Lord Pirrie*.—Is it on a bog?—It is not on bog; it is badly laid. There is another thing, at the time the railway was taken over the contractor was supposed to give the place over free, and instead of that he got the Waterford and Limerick Company at that time to lease a portion of the Waterford and Limerick line to the West Clare, to rent instead of buying out the place and giving it over to the Grand Jury free, and then again he managed to come to an arrangement with the Waterford and Limerick Company on behalf of the West Clare, that they should pay £200 or £400 a year for the station in Kinn instead of building a station.

29103. I suppose that was done to save capital outlay?—I do not think so; I have been told that the Grand Jury were hounded in the thing, and that they thought they would get the whole thing free; that is the impression.

29104. *Mr. Burton*.—They thought they would get the station as part of the line?—Yes.

29105. *Chairman*.—If they had built a station they would have had to pay for it?—I do not know how he got out of the contract.

29106. You mean that he was under an agreement to build a station, and instead of building it he made an arrangement to rent?—That was it.

29107. And that is a perpetual charge upon the West Clare?—Yes.

29108. *Lord Pirrie*.—The rent instead of a new station.

29109. *Chairman*.—The rent is an excess of the interest on the outlay?—I take it in this way, that there should be no rent at all on the station. I take it that the contract covered the station and all.

29110. Was it a lump sum contract?—Yes.

29111. I do not know whether this is on your own knowledge or gossip?—It is common knowledge down our way.

29112. How many years is that ago?—Since the West Clare was built, I suppose seventeen or eighteen years, probably more. There is another thing I have been directed to bring under your notice with reference to officers on the line. There is an officer, the Engineer-in-Chief of the West and South Clare Railways, Mr. Barrington, of Limerick, and the County Council have complained about the way the company have been paying away their money unfairly to Mr. Barrington.

29113. *Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor*.—You do not mean me, sir?—No; the engineer-in-chief of the line. There is a report of the auditor. The County Council have an auditor of their own, and they sent him up to the Clare railways, and he audited the accounts, and if you like, I have his report, and I will put it in.

29114. *Chairman*.—It is a letter, and the auditor found that in addition to the salary of Mr. Barrington, for which he is to give his whole service, he had made a charge of about £100 for some extra work, and that the Directors had paid about £70 of it, also that the balance was unpaid, and your contention is that his salary included that work, and the money should not be paid at all, and that if the Directors of that company had been the representatives of the ratepayers that money would never have been paid?—That is so.

29115. Does not that put it shortly?—Exactly, it

was paid behind the back of the representative of the ratepayers.

29116. *Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor*.—Might I ask you?—I think it is a mistake; he said there was no representative of the ratepayers, although there are an equal number of directors appointed by the ratepayers?—There is not, they are in a minority of one.

29117. Then, there are representatives?—At the time this money was paid there was no representative present.

29118. On the South Clare they are equal?—They are not; there is one more.

I am informed that in the one case they are five and four.

Chairman.—We had evidence that there was a minority of one.

Colonel Hutchinson Pae.—Mr. Balfour Browne said there were four for the shareholders and four for the ratepayers.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—They are two companies—in the one they are equal and in the other there is a majority of one.

29119. *Mr. Burton*.—Has the Chairman a casting vote?—He is a shareholders' director?—Yes.

29120. *Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor*.—He said there was no representation?—I said there was no representative present when it was passed.

Examined by Lord Pirrie.

29121. You give evidence on behalf of your district. Do you mean really to say that the Grand Jury passed the account of this railway although the contractor, who had undertaken to build a station and different other works, failed to complete the contract and did not reduce the amount, and that he was able, therefore, to saddle the county with a charge of rent for the use of the station?—That is my belief.

29122. The Grand Jury, in old days, when responsible for the fiscal work of the county, had to get the going judge of assize to approve of the presentment. You do not mean to say that, in such a celebrated county as yours, it is believed that the Grand Jury, backed up by one of the judges of assize, would authorize such a payment?—I do not believe that the judge of assize backed them at all. Everyone down our way believes it.

29123. I hardly think that in any country in the world, and certainly not in such a place as Ireland, where we are all so very watchful of each other, that such a thing could take place—that a whole station would be omitted from the contract, and yet no reduction be made in the amount payable under the contract. The Grand Jury, before they passed any presentment, whether a pound or fifty thousand pounds, had to get it passed by a judge. I only want that on the minutes?—We believe that the contractor should have taken up and handed over the line free, and that that was part of his contract.

29124. Have you no evidence to show that his contract was reduced by the amount of the cost of the station?—I have not.

29125. You do not think any judge sitting on the Bench would make such a presentment?—I would not say he would, if he knew it.

29126. *Chairman*.—He would not knowingly.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Might I say—the contractor is not present—but I am informed the case is that he never entered into a contract to build a station. He was to lay a third rail into the old Waterford and Limerick station, and there was some objection by the Board of Trade.

29127. *Lord Pirrie*.—I am sure there is some explanation. I only want it on the minutes, that in addition to passing the Grand Jury the presentment had to be approved by the judge. I mention that for the benefit of the Chairman, because it is different in England.

29128. *Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor*.—It is only fair to say for the contractor that that is what I am informed?—There is another thing too. There is a bridge on an important thoroughfare, the road to the Clergy, and that road was reduced several feet.

29129. *Lord Pirrie*.—In height?—The road was lowered several feet, so that they need not raise the railway, and the place is always flooded still.

On 15, 1905.

Mr. Michael Tierney, Representative of the Kinn Urban District Council.

Complaint as to the preparation of the board of the ordinary directors on the Boards of the West and South Clare Railways.

The failure of the contractor to complete his contract as regards the erection of the station at Kinn for the West Clare Railway.

Alleged collusion to over-spend a surplus station at Kinn for the West Clare Railway.

Complaint as to the lowering of one of the public roads at Kinn in connection with the railway construction.

Oct 18, 1907

Mr. Michael
Ternay,
Representative
of the
Kerry Urban
District
Council.

Comparison
between the
receipts and
the working
expenses of
the combined
South and
West Clare
system in
1895 and 1895.

Large increase
in working ex-
penses.
Issue of
capital
expenditure
charged to
revenue.

Receipts suffi-
ciently
uncovered ad-
ministration
of Clare lines

The inquiry
held by the
Board of
Works in 1895
into the
working of the
West and
South Clare
Railways.

Recent
petition to
Lord Lansdowne
from
County Coun-
cil to transfer
the Clare Rail-
ways to them.
Matter in
abeyance
pending report
of Commis-
sion.

29127. Chairman.—That is the county authorities?
—I dare say. It was the Grand Jury.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON POE.

29128. I do not propose to ask many questions about the rates you have to pay, because evidence on that has been given by Father Glynn, and other witnesses. I was not present at the time, but I read the evidence, and I want to point out that for the West Clare Railway the ratepayers of the barony pay £900 a year more than the Wickham, owing to the deficit of working expenses, and that for the South Clare they pay £1,100 a year to meet working expenses. In connection with that matter—I do not think it was brought out at the examination—I want to make a comparison between the receipts and the working expenses of the combined South and West Clare system in 1895 and 1896. I find that the receipts of the entire system was £17,300 in 1895, and the receipts for 1905 were £20,250. That is to say, an increase in receipts of £2,950 a year. Against that the working expenses in 1895 of the combined system were £15,500, and the working expenses in 1905, were £21,500. In other words, while the receipts had gone up by £2,950, the working expenses were increased by nearly £6,000. Those are startling figures—I see by the report of the auditor that the new rolling stock cost £1,544, and there was a relaying of the line at Ennstown at a cost of £1,000.

29129. We had it that there was a large expenditure out of revenue?—That was nearly £5,000.

29130. It shows that while the traffic receipts were up £2,950, the expenditure had increased at double the rate?—That was on account of the permanent way.

29131. I think it is generally allowed that in an ordinary managed railway the working expenses of the line do not increase in the same ratio as any increase of traffic, but, roughly, it increases in the proportion of two to five?—In this case it was the permanent way.

29132. If that policy were followed, where you had an increase of £5,000 a year, the expenses ought only to have gone up £1,000, and instead of the expenses being at the rate of £21,500, they would only be £16,000. In other words, the ratepayers, if there was a normal increase of expenditure in proportion to the increase of revenue, would be saved something like £4,000 a year, which manifestly seems a very great hardship that they should have to pay?—That is accounted for by the new rolling stock and permanent way.

29133. I am only saying that these figures show, I think, that there is something radically unwise in the way that railway is administered?—The ratepayers are not treated fairly, both their half-years are different, and the Treasury answer?—

29134. Chairman.—We had all that fully before.

29135. I think in the year 1898 there was an inquiry by the Board of Works into the management of the railway?—I do not know.

29136. There was. The Board of Works under the Act of 1896 held an inquiry as to the railway, and at that time they did not consider that the necessities of the case warranted any steps being taken. At the present time I think there is a petition before the Lord Lansdowne on behalf of the County Council to transfer the line to them. That is so?—I think it has fallen through.

29137. I think it is simply in abeyance.

29138. Mr. Sturt.—The law officers have decided that the action does not apply.

29139. Colonel HUTCHESON POE.—That is, as regards power to hold an inquiry; but, I think, probably—perhaps the secretary will correct me if I am wrong—that the matter is simply in abeyance pending the result of the Commission.

Mr. Sturt.—The question of law is different, of course, from the question of policy, but, as a matter of fact, I think the law officers have advised that section 7 of the Railways (Ireland) Act, 1896, does not apply to guaranteed lines where there has been no direct Treasury contribution by way of grant. There was no grant in this case, but there are some guaranteed lines where there were grants in addition to the guarantee.

29137A. Colonel HUTCHESON POE.—We need not go into that. Have you anything to say—there was

some evidence given by Father Glynn as to the contribution of £50,000 offered by Mr. Gerald Balfour for a railway in Clare?—No.

29138. It is not worth while asking about it, but I did not know whether you could throw any further light on the subject. It was not clearly explained how it fell through—I do not know how it fell through. The grand jury at the time would not take it. They would not guarantee any further. They said they had enough of guarantee.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

29139. Just a question, Mr. Ternay. As I understand, your view and the view of your neighbours is that through the fault of the people then in charge the contractor was not made to carry out his obligation?—That is what I believe.

29140. About eighteen years ago?—Yes.

29141. We cannot go back on that anyway?—No.

29142. We cannot sue the contractor now, and must just let bygones be bygones?—Very well.

29143. You do not want a second station in Ennis, do you?—We do not want to pay for it.

29144. Unfortunately you have paid and cannot go back?—No.

29145. It would be a great nuisance if he had put up a separate station?—I do not think so.

29147. Do you want to have a station separate from the main station?—I wanted a station to have a ticket check instead of having £900 or £500 to pay to the other company.

29148. Leaving out the money fact, it is better to have one station than two, is it not?—I quite agree, you do not want to pay for what you do not get.

29149. Chairman.—I think the whole complaint is paying for what they do not get?—Yes.

29150. Mr. Acworth. One station is more convenient?—It is quite enough.

29151. I thought you would agree with me. Now, the line that was badly laid and badly equipped is being better laid and equipped?—Part of it.

29152. They are going on improving matters?—Gradually.

29153. They have not got any capital that they can apply to that, have they?—No.

29154. It has got to be done out of revenue?—It has.

29155. When that comes to an end, when the line is once put into decent condition there will be considerable savings?—I do not know. I suppose they will have to begin it again, because it is only being done in small bits.

29156. You do not, I gather, think that it is anything but right to put the line into decent order. It has to be done?—They have to do it except they want to kill the people.

29157. And the only way is out of the gross receipts, however hard it is on the people of Clare?—It is very hard.

Examined by Mr. STURT.

29158. I should like to ask you about a passage in your statement which has not been mentioned, the rate for rabbits as compared with that for snags; they are both products of your district?—Yes.

29159. You say that the rate is the same for a rabbit as for a dozen snags?—Yes.

29160. A rabbit is worth 9d. and a dozen snags worth 9d.?—Yes.

29161. The snags make more profit out of one snag than he does out of a rabbit?—Yes.

29162. Yet the sending of the rabbit costs as much as a dozen snags?—Yes.

29163. That seems to require consideration.

29164. Colonel HUTCHESON POE.—You don't send snags away in truck loads?—No, snags and rabbits go by passenger train.

29164A. Mr. Sturt.—It is more than twelve times as much as for a rabbit, because a snag is much more profitable?—Yes.

29165. There was an undertaking given to you in consideration of your support to the Amalgamation Bill that Ennis would be grouped with Limerick?—Yes.

29166. Was that in writing?—Yes, I have a copy of the guarantee here.

29167. You say there was a written agreement between the promoters of the Amalgamation Bill and the County Council and the other public bodies that Ennis should be grouped with Limerick?—Yes.

29166. That has not been kept?—It has not been kept.

29169. Has that entailed a serious disadvantage on you?—Yes.

29170. If that agreement had been kept, how far would the grievance of which you complain have been removed?—If the Great Southern had grouped Ennis with Limerick, as they had agreed to do by a contract, signed by five of the directors, the grievance would entirely disappear.

29171. Would that affect the grievance that you have with regard to Gort?—I think it would. I think we would be in much the same position as Gort.

29172. You allege that people in Limerick who want to send goods to Gort can do so more cheaply than you?—Yes.

29173. If you were grouped would that disappear? Yes, I think so, because we would be in the same position.

29174. Gort is more favourably situated than you are?—That is so. The party in the County Council now that they wanted to split the Waterford and Limerick Line of Ennis, they thought that they had a good chance of having it, and the Great Southern came and made this guarantee, that they would take in the West Clare trade, and group Ennis with Limerick, and the County Council withdrew their opposition to the amalgamation of the whole line. But since that was done, whatever way the County Council did their business, it seems that the directors of the Great Southern Railway were able to walk them out of the bargain, and as soon as they got the Amalgamation Bill passed they absolutely refused to carry out any guarantee.

29175. Does this failure to carry out the agreement exercise a fatal influence on your town as a commercial and distributing centre?—It does, the people have no confidence in the railway at all.

29176. This West Clare Railway is a burden of £5,000 a year?—It is.

29177. Is it a painful burden to bear?—It is very heavy. The poorer the district the more they have to pay.

29178. In a county of poor occupants?—It goes on here, and the poorer the district the heavier it is.

29179. By way of explanation you say the line was in such a way, and the rolling stock was of such quality that the line has now to be relaid from time to time, the rolling stock renewed, and the cost provided out of revenue?—Exactly.

29180. That is, you say, capital expenditure out of revenue?—Yes.

29181. And the result has been this heavy loss?—Yes.

29182. Whether the line is managed by the casting-vote of the Chairman or otherwise, the shareholders' directors have a majority?—They have.

29183. They vote together?—They do.

29184. I understand that practically all the business is done by the shareholders' directors?—Yes, there are tri-weekly meetings, and there are no baronial directors present.

29185. Even if they were present they would have no power?—They have no power.

29186. Then it amounts to this that the people who have no pecuniary interest in the line have the control, and that those who have to provide the money have no control?—Yes.

29187. You say that should be revised, and that those who pay the paper should call the tune—that those who pay the money should control the line?—Yes.

29188. You want the line relaid and made on the broad gauge?—Yes. There is no hope of any development of the tourist traffic in the West until that is done.

29189. Even if you had a board comprising baronial directors, would the locality bear the cost of it?—No.

29190. Do you see any good prospect unless lines like this are dealt with as part of a general Irish system under an Irish authority?—There is absolutely no other way of doing it.

29191. Mr. Atworth?—You have there the undertaking of the Great Southern and Western Railway at the time of the amalgamation?—I have.

29192. Does not it begin with the words, "In the event of the Great Southern taking over the West Clare Railway"?—I don't think so. "In the event of the amalgamation."

29193. With the West Clare Railway?—In the event of amalgamation, the Great Southern and Western Railway are prepared to acquire this line on obtaining the consent of the South and West Clare Companies and the approval of Parliament.

29194. And then, after that, they have not got the West Clare Railway, and therefore are not bound by the bargain?—They have absolutely made no attempt.

29195. Then, where is the bargain?—The latter part is no use apart from the first part.

29196. Colinet Muldoon's Pet?—As a matter of fact they approached them in 1860.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor. While negotiations were pending legal proceedings were taken.

29196a. Chairman?—Do you know if the baronial directors are summoned to the weekly meetings?

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—They are summoned to the quarterly meetings.

Oct. 11, 1907.

Mr. Michael Tierney, Representative of the Ennis Urban Sanitary Council.

The constitution of the Board of the Clare Line deprives the majority of any voice in the management of the railways.

The railway and conversion to broad gauge of the line recommended.

The Irish railways should be worked as one system under an Irish authority.

The bargain entered into with the County Council as regards the taking over of the West and South Clare Railways not fulfilled by the Great Southern and Western Company.

Mr. JAMES O'DEMPSEY examined by the CHAIRMAN.

29196. Mr. O'Dempsey, you live in Belfast?—I do.

29196a. Am I right in assuming that you are a member of the Corporation of Belfast?—No, but I have been. I have been alderman and councillor.

29197. You were Councillor first and then Alderman?—No, the other way about.

29198. You are President of the Belfast and Ulster Vintners' Association?—That is so.

29199. Is it in that capacity you come here as a representative man?—Not exactly. I have been a long time in business, and I live adjoining the Midland Railway, and I have over two acres of land leased there. I have taken an interest in public affairs, and I am concerned with some matters which I will deal with later on.

29200. You are acquainted with the Northern Counties Railway?—Yes.

29201. You are of opinion that in its inception there were mistakes made?—They made the railway in the direction of Carrickfergus. It was a roundabout way for passengers to Ballymena, Ballymore, Coleraine, or Derry or Portrush. I think it was a round of about seven miles.

29202. That round about way of about seven miles makes it necessary for passengers to pay an additional fare?—They have done that since 1848, when the line was made.

29203. Has an effort been made to get the Northern Counties to alter that in any way?—There was a proposed railway from the Great Northern that would have cut in on the Northern Counties Railway, and to avoid the competition the Northern Counties Railway promoted a Bill in Parliament, and it was passed

into law in the year 1876. It is the 41 & 42 Victoria. It was to make a loop-line, and the loop line was to be six miles five furlongs six chains, commencing at a junction with the railway of the Company at Jordanstown, and terminating at a point seven chains eastward of the north mile post of the railway at Killybegs, east of the railway passage at Ballymena.

29204. That would have shortened the distance?—Yes, and it was to be completed in five years, and in 1881 they got an Act extending it over three years more, and in 1882 they got a section to abandon the whole thing.

29205. And there it is?—Yes.

29206. You have to go a round about way until something is done?—Yes. In my early experience, I was connected with portion of the railway myself. I served my time in connection with the railway when Mr. Dargan had it, between '66 and '68—from Ballymena to Portrush—the mileage to Ballymena from Belfast was then thirty-three miles. I understand it is now thirty-four, and they are practically a mile out of town, where the station is, that is thirty-five miles to Ballymena, and only twenty-seven miles by road. I think it is a hardship to make passengers pay for this. The third class would be a penny a mile out, and a halfpenny back, or may be more.

29207. About a halfpenny?—And I think it is unfair to have it continued for ever. It suited some people who promoted the line to make it along the beach in the direction of Carrickfergus.

29208. Do you know anything about the goods rates?—Well, I look on the information given to the public as totally deficient.

Mr. James O'Dempsey, President of the Belfast and Ulster Vintners' Association.

Statutory powers obtained in 1876 for a loop line to shorten the route subsequently abandoned.

Extra fares charged to passengers between Belfast and Ballymena resulting from the direction route.

Complaint as to deficient information as to goods rates generally given to the public.

Oct. 14, 1907

Mr. James O'Donoghue, President of the Belfast and Ulster Veterans' Association.

The publication of goods rates recommended.

Complaint as to carriage charges imposed, although no service given.

28900. What do you mean?—We don't understand the rates; they don't publish them.

28910. If they did do, you think you would understand them?—Well, I don't know; but I think I would. I would try. I was in the business myself.

28911. Oh, yes; you are an old railway man?—Yes, and I have been in business for about forty-seven years, so that I know a good deal.

28912. Your idea is that the goods rates, like the passenger rates, should be published?—Decidedly. The information was concealed from me until I found it out by accident, that when I delivered goods on railway tracks, I was charged for the collection of them as well.

28913. In the rate?—Yes.

28914. But you could claim a draw-back for carriage?—I didn't know, and when I did find it out, Mr. Cotton, the manager, would not give me an satisfaction. I wrote to Mr. Clarke, the Chairman of the Railway, and I got information that a shilling a ton would be allowed to me, but he never paid me, although the Chairman of the Railway Company directed Mr. Cotton to go into the matter, and allow me a shilling a ton, I never got a penny, and the difficulty is that you can't undertake a prosecution against them. It's a serious matter to prosecute.

28915. A matter like that could have been settled in the County Court?—But it's no joke to go to the County Court against railway companies.

28916. You didn't get it?—No.

28917. And you didn't know you were entitled to it until you found it out by some means?—If those were published, you say you could see them?—Yes; I could understand them if they were published. The public don't know it.

28918. They have them at the station?—So it appears.

28919. But you have never been to look?—No, and I don't know where I would get them. If they were even sold it would be an advantage to the public.

28920. On the Continent they do sell goods rates as well as passenger books. Well, now, what about the passenger fares on the Midland Railway—that is, the old Northern Counties?—Yes.

28921. Well, what do you say about the fares?—I don't know much about them. They charge, I think, a penny a mile and run a good many excursion trains, and that sort of thing.

Suggestion as to defining the boundaries of railways.

28922. What do you mean by saying that the boundaries of the railway should be defined; every company does define them?—They have been extending them. With regard to that I have an Ordinance sheet. They have added thirty feet wide to the railway in any place. You will see my place on that Ordinance Sheet (*Witness produces Ordinance Sheet*).

28923. Lord Pirrie.—You say about thirty feet all yours?—There is part of mine at present (*Pirrie proceeds to point out on Sheet*). That is the railway; that belongs to the Corporation and the public—that land over there; that is mine, and I occupy half an acre more; that is the side belonging to the Corporation here; they have taken in about thirty feet down to boundary.

28924. Lord Pirrie.—What do you mean by municipal boundary?—They put up posts and took it in.

28925. Chairman.—That was the land of the Corporation?—Yes; after I made a contention the Corporation got back £8 6s 3d.

28926. Lord Pirrie.—I suppose it was when you were in the Corporation you made that?—Yes, I could show you the debate. Perhaps you were in the chair at the time.

28927. Chairman.—Do you mean Lord Pirrie?—Yes, I had the honour of sitting under his leadership there.

28928. Have you come here by invitation of Lord Pirrie?—Not at all; I don't think he knew I was coming till he saw me here.

28929. Lord Pirrie.—I did not know you were coming.

28930. Chairman.—What you were mentioning is a matter between you and the railway?—No, that case is over; but I have an Act of Parliament which defines that they are not to extend beyond the toe of their embankment. There ought to be some authority to keep them within their legitimate bounds.

28931. There is the borough surveyor?—Oh, we have a town clerk who could tell you more about it. I could show you an Act of Parliament where the toe

of the embankment is their boundary, and they have no Act of Parliament to extend beyond that. On my side there was a quick-set hedge, and it is understood as the boundary of the railway—and there would be a drain; I think it is about six feet in allowed. The railway company on my lands came in and put up posts and fences and prevented me from even looking over at the six-foot drain; and there is a watercourse there, and at flood time pressures should be taken. They took away my piling that was bounding it, and when I complained they came and threw it back into my field. I think that is contemptible sort of treatment.

28932. Lord Pirrie.—They gave it back?—They threw it into the field in a heap. It was formerly the Northern Counties Railway; that was about a year or two ago.

28933. Chairman.—Well, now to come to a more serious matter. I am sure you have considered the railway problem in this country; are you of opinion that the railways should be under one control?—Before that, there is a matter there, if you please, in my statement that I should like to refer to; that is the carriage of corpses.

28934. I saw it, but it is such a deadly subject I passed it over?—If you know the difficulty some people have had about this expenditure—I have a personal interest in this matter myself.

28935. You are very much alive?—Yes; but if you have your relatives to bury. At one time there was a contention between some collection of my Church and the Corporation about a burial ground, and he had to remove coffins to Ballymorney, a distance of fifty-four miles. That was 54s. I think that's a scandalous charge.

28936. I think it cheap; you have to have a separate truck for it?—Certainly not; they were put into the ordinary goods' van.

28937. Lord Pirrie.—With the cattle and pigs?—Oh, no; it was only the weight of the article. In other cases where children are concerned you might take them into your own carriage. They charge half-price for a child—sixpence a mile. It is hard in the case of people who come into town from the country. I knew a gentleman this year who had to be taken beyond Derby. He had no relations in town, and they didn't wish to open up a new grave for him. This is a serious matter and some people suffer by it. There ought to be a proper charge for these. Take the railway line I have been speaking of, where there is seven or eight miles of a roadabout—there is 7s. or 8s. gone.

28938. Chairman.—I think the shilling charge is universal?—Well, it is a totally unjust and scandalous charge for a corpse. The highest weight would be more than about two cwt. It is a question of weight. The relatives have to carry them in and carry them out.

28939. Now, come on to another question. Are you of opinion that the railways in Ireland should be under one control?—I am, decidedly.

28940. And that control should be a National control?—Decidedly.

28941. Do you agree it has been the condition of things in Ireland that these English companies have come in and absorbed Irish railways?—I would not allow them to have any control over Irish railways. I would regulate the question of through rates, but I would not give them control. We have a very large amount of works at the York-stead, near the station of the Northern Counties. We are building on them, and were building before it was taken over by the Midland, and there was great apprehension that the bulk of the making of carriages and wagons would be transferred to Derby, where they have many works. It may arise any day.

28942. It has not arisen yet?—It hasn't come off yet, it may come off any day.

28943. You would prefer that the English railway companies should have nothing to do with the Irish railways, and that the Irish railways should be under one control, and that an Irish control?—Yes.

28944. Mr. Serier.—You were going to add something else?—I was going to say you are also concerned with the canals, and we have a canal called the Lagan Navigation, and they call it also the Ulster Canal, and the management of it is as if it was a land as if it was owned in London. We know nothing about it. I have studied the matter, and at one period during the Irish Parliament there was a tax levied in the neighbourhood to make it. There

was a tax on whiskey. They carried on a levy on the rates to make that canal, and the public have no knowledge or information about it. The place where the first lock on the Lagan Navigation Canal is at a place called—I think your lordship knows the place—it is called Molly Ward's. It is nearly three miles from the Exchange—from Belfast. Here is a map that will show it. We have the river extending up to it. (His Grace produced a map). In summer time, only for the mud, you could walk across it for all the water that's running down it, so that that portion of the river is not navigable unless at high tide. You will see the absurd silted construction, and the great width, and its mud banks until you go up three miles before you can get a boat to enter the Lagan Navigation Canal.

29246. *Chairman*.—This is rather beyond my inquiry. A Canal Commission has been inquiring into that?—Very well, but what I want to say is that there ought to be locks at the Queen's Bridge.

29246. *Lord Pirrie*.—He means that if there was a proper lock there the transportation would be cheaper.

29246. *Chairman*.—Yes, and it would be continuous. Lord Pirrie knows all about it.

29247. *Mr. Seaton*.—Do you attach great importance to the publication of the goods rates?—Yes.

29248. The passenger fares are published; that is six fares—three classes and three returns from each station to all other stations?—That is so.

29248. The public are informed of the fares, but, although there is a theoretical power to consult the rate book, practically, the goods rates are private?—I never saw them.

29250. You consider it bad and inadvisable that important public business should be carried on in a private way?—I do, decidedly.

29251. And you are desirous that goods rates should be made available—that a knowledge of them should be made available to those concerned in paying them?—Decidedly.

29252. There are eight classes of goods, and certain rates for each class. Do you think it would be practicable, without making it too bulky or too obscure, to have at each station a list of rates for each class from that station to other stations?—I think it is quite possible to do it conveniently.

29253. You think if there was a will there would be found a way?—Yes.

29254. *Mr. Seaton*. (G & F. Railway).—It is there.

29254. *Mr. Seaton*.—Do you think it might be published in such a form that it might be taken away, or that anyone could buy it and have it for reference?—Yes.

29255. So that a person might have it in his office, and that revised editions might be published from time to time?—Yes, quite so.

29256. That would end a great deal of bitter controversy as to special rates and temporary rates, and disputes as to what is a rate and what is not?—It would give information to persons most concerned, who have to pay the tariff.

29257. You have been a very long time a citizen of Belfast?—Well, we have met before, I think.

29258. Are you a member of the Chamber of Commerce?—I was for a long period.

29259. Were you ever a member of the Harbour Board?—No; but I have fought a few elections.

29260. That's the next best thing?—They wouldn't let a man like me in there.

29261. Well, "We cannot command success, but we can deserve it!"—We can try.

29262. We had evidence from the Chamber of Commerce and the Harbour Board. Are these bodies representative of the opinions or interests of the City of Belfast?—No, they are very exclusive.

29263. Do they really represent the opinions or interests of the city?—Certainly not; they are totally exclusive.

29264. The relations of the members of that body with the railway authorities are such that they would not take the view of the ordinary citizen with regard to transport?—I discussed matters with them in public, and I could get no sympathy. They seem to be sympathetic with all the railway companies, whatever way it goes off.

29265. So far from representing the general opinion of Ireland, or local opinion in Belfast, you think they represent only a fraction of local opinion?—There must be some special terms for their own particular industries. That is my opinion, and I am conversant with the three.

29266. You think their minds are influenced by special terms?—I look on their attitude as mostly in that direction.

29267. As to future control and finance, you think we might fairly say to England—"If you are inclined to make restriction, well and good; if you are inclined to lend money, well and good; if you are not inclined to do either one or the other, let us raise the money ourselves; if you will not save us, let us save ourselves?"—I would purchase the interests of the railway companies, but I would not be extravagant, as some people have designs we should be. We had a tramway undertaking in Belfast, and if there was to be a dealing of the same kind with regard to the railways, it would be an unsafe proposition to face.

29268. The public management of a united system of railways would act in this way, that first they would have to study the public by reduction of rates and fares, and they would also have to try to avoid working the railways at a loss, and the reemployment of these conditions would make economy a very serious duty?—Yes; if we had economical men.

29269. Public interest in economy would take care about the quality of the men?—I would hope so, but I have not seen so much of it lately.

29270. Where public interest comes in that would be doubtful?—Economy should be practised in this country in a great many ways that it isn't.

29271. You consider that what Ireland needs is a united system, and a system governed by men responsible to public opinion?—Most decidedly; they would be more sympathetic.

Examined by Mr. Asquith.

29272. You don't approve of the purchase of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway by the Midland?—No.

29273. When it was before Parliament nobody opposed it, and it was passed as an unopposed Bill?—I will tell you how it is. I suppose it is so; I will take it that way. If the Corporation went for a Bill to Parliament, say, the Belfast Corporation, I think it is only five persons who are required to take a plebiscite of the whole city; when we get a board like the Harbour Commissioners or the Water Commissioners or the railway, we can go to London and spend money like valiant men, and it is no joke to enter opposition against the Bill. I tried it with the Water Commissioners, and was refused a *locus standi* by the House of Lords, and it was a technical point—because I did not describe myself as an owner of land—I described myself as a ratepayer.

29274. You have municipal railways in Belfast?—Yes.

29275. Belfast is a business-like place?—It is going on very well.

29276. It prides itself on being up-to-date and business-like?—We are proud of it.

29277. But it cannot manage its tramways?—I think it bought them too dear and paid too much for the undertaking. The capital has been wastefully laid out.

29278. You are satisfied that if the Irish Nation bought the railways they would not make a wasteful bargain?—I'm not sure about that. I should like to be suggested to prevent them.

29279. You are not quite sure they wouldn't do it unless you were by?—I should like to be there to prevent them.

Examined by Colonel HORTON, P.M.

29280. About the Ulster Canal, you don't think it had an effect on the railway rates?—The evidence before Lord Shuttleworth's Commission was that it had considerable effect on the rates of the Great Northern system. I only wish to call attention to the railway position, the evidence of witnesses in respect to that canal was that the canal brought about a considerable reduction in rates on the Great Northern system, which would not have been the case but for the water competition?—I'm not so sure about that.

Examined by Lord PRINCE.

29281. Do you mean to convey that the charge for this deadly subject, the corpse, only applies to the Midland Railway or to all the railways coming to Belfast?—All the railways in Ireland.

29282. I took it you meant to convey it was the Midland Company?—I say it is generally charged; it is a shameless charge.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. James O'Donnell, President of the Belfast and Ulster Workmen's Association.

Allegation that the views of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and Harbour Board on Irish Railways are not representative of Belfast opinion.

Unification of the railways under Irish control proposed.

The purchase of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway by the Midland Railway of England disapproved.

The expense incurred in opposing Parliamentary Bills.

The evidence given before Lord Shuttleworth's Commission in respect to the effect of the Ulster Canal on railway rates alleged to be.

The excessive rate for corpses.

Oct. 15, 1897.

Mr. James O'Donoghue, President of the Belfast and Ulster Landholders' Association.

The acquisition of Irish railways by English companies objected to.

29333. You took exception to the Midland Company coming to Ireland and investing money in an Irish undertaking. Were you not aware that many of the great English Insurance Companies and financial undertakings had investments on their books to invest no money in Ireland many years ago, and do you not think that the advantage to Ireland of a big company like the Midland Company coming, or considering even, that it would pay them to invest such a large sum as they did was beneficial to us living in Ireland, and gave confidence to outside investors in Great Britain?—I would not mind Englishmen coming with capital to Ireland if they were well-disposed, but they are not well-disposed, and they prevented industries being established in Ireland but it would interfere with their monopolies. I saw a Belfast balance sheet published in the newspapers last week showing over a million of money invested in 8½ per cent. Indian Consols. If we can send large sums away we don't want an English company coming over to invest there instead.

29334. I don't think you quite realise the question. There was a want of confidence substituted by the English investing public. As a man of broad views, do you not think, for the advantage of Belfast and of Ireland as a whole, it was beneficial to see one of the leading English companies stating that they could risk such a large sum in Ireland, and giving confidence to others?—I am not satisfied, and I would not like to give them control with a directorate sitting in Derby, and a local Committee working in Belfast. I think you are a director yourself.

29335. No, I have no interest whatever, and no interest in any railway company in Ireland?—But you were.

29336. I was!—You know more about it than I do. I would not give them power in Ireland to swamp us or interfere with us. They are not very friendly.

29337. All the evidence we have had is that the Midland Railway portion, that is the Northern Counties and Donegal, has been beneficial. We had in evidence on Saturday that the second-class fares on every railway practically in Ireland, with the exception of the Midland Railway section, are 62 to 63 per cent. higher than the third, whereas that very line is only 30 to 40 per cent.—the highest 40 and the lowest 30. The lowest second-class fares in Ireland are on that line, and surely with your financial ex-

perience (when I was Lord Mayor, Mr. O'Donoghue was the leader of the Finance Committee, and criticised it more clearly almost than any other man), you will admit that these second-class fares—which are lower than on any other line—must be advantageous?—I don't think there is much need of the second class; very few go second, most go first or third, and third has become a common thing on this line.

29338. About that loop-line that you think should be made to reduce the distance to Ballymena by seven or eight miles. You are living seven or eight miles from the district?—No, three or four.

29339. Well, that makes it better. I didn't want to put you too near. Are you not aware that the incline of the hill getting there would be a very serious difficulty in making and working a loop-line, that by going to Carrickfergus Junction and then back, the incline was made very much less, and that the difficult gradient was the reason why the loop-line was given up?—It should have been made.

29340. Did you not see much difficulty in making it?—I don't think there was any difficulty. I think the difficulty was to start it, because there was a line to be made across about Broadway, and it was to bluff them that Hill was passed, and when they got it they showed it overboard in a few years. Passengers, I believe are still paying the additional mileage, which they should not pay.

29341. I tell as you do about the matter, but the graduates are so severe that I don't think any railway company could have gone on?—I can't see that. I know the courts, and I can't see much in the gradient. I wish to say about the Board of Trade—I applied to them with regard to an extension on the railway near my place, where the sea came and took the earth away within a short distance of the railway, they said it was no affair of theirs. I do not know what the Board of Trade interfere in railway affairs for. When there is a smash-up and some deaths they come to the inquest. I would rather they would extend a friendly hand to every undertaking in this country. The sooner the Board of Trade in London has done with Irish railways the better. I have been in the office and I know some of the officials and could show you letters. It is a silly thing to ask this public board to advise in anything.

Mr. F. A. S. KING examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. F. A. S. King.

Manager of the Arklow Brick and Tile Works.

The F. A. S. King's handling of the Arklow brick trade reported to satisfactory.

29342. You are manager of the Arklow Brick and Tile Works?—Yes.

29343. And you are acquainted with the rates for bricks from your particular works?—Yes.

29344. What railway serves you?—The Dublin and South-Eastern Railway from Arklow to Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin. They serve us well, and at reasonable rates. I have not a word to say against them. On every occasion they have done everything they could to help on the business. The only fault I found was that wagons were detained by customers failing to discharge them quickly, and I suggested to the manager to enforce their demurrage rules in order that a wagon might be set free to be re-loaded and started off again. They are doing that now and wagons are available.

29345. As far as local rates are concerned, you have no cause to complain?—None whatever.

29346. Then with regard to the through rates, will you tell us what the difficulties were with what company was it?—With the Great Southern and Western.

29347. Can you give us the date?—In the beginning of 1906, about January.

29348. What is the complaint you make?—I wanted to send bricks in full wagon loads from Arklow to Kilbrann, which was the station before the Rosslare Harbour station was built—before the new station was constructed. The total distance was about fifty-two miles. Our rate on the Dublin and South-Eastern Railway from Arklow to Wexford North was 2s. 6d. a ton; the old rate existing on the line from Wexford North to Kilbrann was threepence for a hundred bricks. That has been in existence for a number of years. The bricks were, approximately, three tons per thousand, so that the charge per hundred bricks works out at 10s. per ton North Wexford to Kilbrann. I asked the through rate to book bricks direct from Arklow to Kilbrann, and I was quoted 3s. 10d. per ton, specially reduced rate. I pointed out to the manager of the Great Southern

and Western that this cost us 6d. a ton, because I could book from Arklow to North Wexford for 2s. 6d., and then re-book to Kilbrann for 10d., making a total of 3s. 4d. on the two loadings, whereas the through rate from Arklow to Kilbrann was 3s. 10d. per ton. That meant that I had either to book bricks twice over or lose sixpence a ton, meaning 1s. 6d. per thousand on common bricks.

29349. What are they worth?—Their worth would be according to the point of delivery. At Kilbrann they would be worth about 40s., with the rate cut that. With regard to the matter of the rate from Arklow to Kilbrann—

29350. It seems to me that the through rate was sixpence more than the sum of the two loads?—Yes.

29351. Have you another case?—Yes, in July, 1906, we booked fourteen tons of bricks in two wagons from Arklow to Bridgetown (Great Southern and Western). We were debited 5s. 1d. a ton on this lot. We had to pay 2s. 6d. from Arklow to North Wexford—forty-two miles—and 2s. 7d. for another nine or ten miles, from North Wexford to Bridgetown. I at once applied to the station agent at Wexford to let me know the local rates for bricks to Bridgetown. I got no reply. I waited five days, and called at his office and heard that he was himself awaiting rates from his manager. Two days later I telephoned to the Great Southern and Western manager at Kinsalebridge to ask for a quotation. Four days after that I wrote a reminder, and, eventually, I got a quotation of 3s. 10d. per ton—North Wexford to Bridgetown. I immediately pointed out to the manager of the Great Southern and Western that Bridgetown and Kilbrann are equidistant from Wexford and that the rate of threepence per hundred, equalling sixpence per ton North Wexford to Kilbrann, was a fair and reasonable one, but that the rate of 3s. 10d. a ton Wexford to Bridgetown would kill all chance of traffic, but I could get no concession from him except a hint that the rate, Wexford to Kilbrann, was too low. On the 25th January of the present year I wrote to the

Complaint as to excessive rates from Arklow to Kilbrann.

The through rates higher than the sum of the two loads.

manager of the Great Southern and Western Railway, stating that his agent at North Wexford proposed to charge me 1s. per ton, or 7s. per wagon, for freight on bricks from North Wexford to South Wexford, a distance of less than one mile, that he quoted me 2s. 6d. per wagon as freight on bricks, North Wexford to the southern end of Wexford-quay, within 200 yards of the South station, and I wanted to know why I should be charged 4s. 6d. a wagon for 200 yards further, and I asked for a lower quotation. After several arguments, extending over three weeks, I got a communication dated 19th February from the manager of the Great Southern and Western Railway, stating that up till 30th June, 1907, he would haul bricks from North to South Wexford at 3s. per wagon not exceeding six tons—about two-thirds of a mile. This concession expired on the 30th June, 1907, and if I require it I must spend another three weeks on getting another such concession; meanwhile my customers are waiting, for no real cause, except the inability of the Great Southern and Western Company to fix a sensible rate to remain in force till further orders. On the 26th of last month, on making personal inquiry of the station agent at North Wexford, I am informed that the old rate of threepence per 100, or twopence a ton, for bricks, North Wexford to Kilmine, remains in force, but that for bricks booked North Wexford to Rosslare Harbour the rate is reduced to 5d. per ton. An extra eightpence has to be paid for three-quarters of a mile further, from Kilmine to the harbour. That is the state of last month. There is building going on, and I am interested in the delivery of the bricks as close to the harbour as possible.

29301. It is a new place and may develop?—As far as I can learn, it will greatly develop.

29302. With that exception, your persistent applications to the railway company have been successful?—In a measure; but at what cost of time and trouble.

29303. I admit it seems an unreasonable time to wait. But with the other line you have no complaint?—No.

29304. And the Great Southern and Western, after pressure, have conceded practically what you thought fair and reasonable?—Not with respect to the Bridgetown traffic.

29305. Is that altered?—No, it is not.

29306. Do you actually re-engage it?—Yes, I re-engage to Kilmine. I did that yesterday. I am sending goods to Kilmine, and I save sixpence a ton by re-loading in Wexford. It was done yesterday.

29307. That is subject to explanation by the Railway Company, it does seem strange?—Yes. Is 1s. 10d. rate from Wexford to Bridgetown put the out of the market in Bridgetown. Customers would not deal at the prices at which I could afford to deliver bricks.

Examined by Mr. ADEWORTH.

29308. You are satisfied with the local rate from North Wexford to Kilmine?—Yes.

29309. You are satisfied with the rate from North to South Wexford?—Not quite; I have got a concession of three shillings per wagon, but temporarily.

29310. If you had that permanent, you would be satisfied?—I should think 2s. 6d. a wagon would be an ample charge for two-thirds of a mile.

29311. You would be satisfied to get a Wexford quay rate of 2s. 6d.?—Yes, but with the Bridgetown rate it is impossible for me to do any trade. I don't know the local rate to Bridgetown. The only rate I have got from the manager of the Great Southern and Western is a 1s. 10d. rate from North Wexford to Bridgetown. That seems to be the local rate there.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—That is the same rate for twelve miles.

29312. Mr. Adey.—That is not the brick rate? Mr. Smyth (G.S. and W.R.)—It is a specially low rate, 1s. 10d. a ton for twelve miles.

Witness.—I read the same as Kilmine, about ten miles. I take it to be rather under ten miles; it is eight by road.

29313. Mr. Adey.—Is 10d. is quoted as rates for bricks in wagons?

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—Yes, it is for twelve miles.

29314. Mr. Adey.—Nearly two-pence a mile. (To Witness).—You are not satisfied with the rate to Rosslare Harbour?—I think it is excessive. An extra eightpence a ton for three-quarters of a mile is severe.

29315. That would be on about the same basis as the Bridgetown rate?—Something smaller, 1s. 6d. and 1s. 10d.

29316. Kilmine is an old rate; that is their explanation. They can't get rid of it?—They have suggested that it is too low.

29317. About the Rosslare rate, is that on the rail way, or does it bring you to the harbour works?—It doesn't bring me to the port works at all. The place I wish to have delivery is at the side near the cattle sheds.

29318. Well, I don't know the district, is it technically in the harbour limits?—I couldn't answer that.

Examined by Colonel HURMESON P.A.

29319. Is there much building trade going on?—There was considerable building going on, and I sent bricks to Kilmine by schooner, and had them carried to Ballysharry for building, in order to get them there without having to pay rack rates.

29320. Do you send bricks to Waterford?—Not during the last ten months. I sent a considerable quantity of facing bricks to Waterford.

29321. What is the price of facing bricks at your works?—From 40s. to 60s., according to class and port, and ordinary stock bricks about 30s. at the works.

29322. You get that?—Yes, at the works.

29323. I am in the brick industry myself. I congratulate you?—For bricks we can sell right off at the yard we get a better price.

29324. I am glad you can get 35s. for second class bricks at the works. I am glad to hear it. Do I understand that the through rate from Arklow to Bridgetown is 5s. 1d. per ton?—Yes.

29325. 15s. 3d. per thousand; that was prohibitive?—Yes.

29326. Now, I think the rate is, Arklow to North Wexford, 7s. 6d. per thousand, and 1s. 10d. a thousand from North Wexford to Bridgetown?—Is 10d. per ton.

29327. That makes 11s. 10d.?—It makes 12s.

29328. That is your present rate?—Yes, at Bridgetown, 12s. a thousand.

29329. That would put it out of the question?—Quite so.

29330. There is considerable competition in the brick trade at present?—As you are aware, there is a very small business being done in the brick trade.

29331. And that necessitates brick manufacturers selling bricks at as low a figure as possible?—Well, the present price of coal necessitates their selling them at as high a figure as possible.

29332. Is it better to sell at a low figure and to sell a quantity, than not sell any at all?

29333. Lord Purser.—Where does your principal competition come from?—Are there locally made bricks, or from Dublin or Dundalk?—There are works in Waterford, Carrigan, Rathmore, Kill-a-the-Grange and Dolphin's Cove. I have competition on all sides, except due East.

29334. If the railway company reduced the rates to you, they would have to do so to all manufacturers in the district?—I should say so, certainly; I don't wish any special concession.

Oct 15, 1907.

Mr. F. A. S. Kelly, Manager of the Arklow Brick and Tile Works.

A reference is the Wexford and Rosslare brick rates asked for.

San-conveyance is sorted to to escape the high rates on the Great Southern and Western Railway.

Selling price of bricks at Arklow Works.

The rate from Wexford to Bridgetown prohibitive.

The location of competitive brick works.

The Commission then adjourned till the following meeting of eleven o'clock.

FORTY-NINTH PUBLIC SITTING—WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16TH, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART. Chairman; Right Hon. LORD PIERRE, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JERRELL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON POE, C.B., Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

MR. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Oct. 16, 1907

Statement
as to future
sittings of the
Commission

Chairman.—Perhaps it would be convenient that I should mention that the Commission have decided this morning that the next sittings will be in London. It is principally evidence from public departments that we shall receive. We propose to sit in London on Friday, the 8th November, and to have continuous sittings up to Saturday, the 16th. Then we come to December. We have unanimously decided this morning, taking into consideration the Christmas holidays and the difficulty in getting the Commission together in the beginning of the month, that we will have no

sitting in December, so that the Railway case will not be required before January.

Mr. Tallow.—I think that that will be very convenient.

Mr. Caster Barringtons, Solicitor.—I may say it is a most convenient arrangement, and we are much obliged.

Chairman.—Perhaps I ought to mention that if time permits, we shall take some evidence from the light railways in London. It is not settled yet.

MR. JAMES CROAN examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr James
Croan
Representative
of Messrs.
Croan & Sons,
Dublin

29336. You are a member of the firm of Croan and Sons, soap manufacturers, Dublin?—Yes.

29336. Is that an extensive industry?—We are manufacturers in England. Our's is a branch house here. We are established about fifteen years. It is not a very extensive industry with us, but it is in the edible fat. We are soap manufacturers, and we manufacture edible fat, both here and in England.

29337. You send a great deal away by railway?—In moderate quantities. We manufacture here, and we ship mostly to England, and in large quantities.

29338. I need not ask you any questions about that I suppose that in the export from here to England the rates are not excessive?—No.

29339. With regard to the traffic you have to obtain tallow in Ireland, have you any particular complaint to make with reference to the rates?—We have a complaint to make. We have made a complaint with reference to one of the railway companies here. We brought recently some goods from New Ross to Dublin. On their arrival we found that the rate charged was equal to 18s. 9d. per ton. We consider that a very heavy rate, indeed.

29340. What was the traffic?—Tallow in casks.

29341. What is the distance from New Ross to Dublin?—Offhand, I could not say exactly, but it is between 70 and 100 miles. We know, roughly, the distance. We know what the rates are on other places, and we think that that rate is very excessive. We wrote to the railway company, and after very considerable correspondence they said they thought it was a reasonable rate, and could not reduce it, and that it was according to schedule. It was 18s. 9d. per ton on the gross.

29342. Do you know the rate to Liverpool from New Ross via Dublin?—Yes; 18s. per ton. We discovered that that rate existed. We pointed out this rate to the railway company. They said they considered the rate of 18s. 9d. to Dublin was reasonable, and that ended the matter for the time being.

29343. I want it perfectly clear that the rate from New Ross to Liverpool via Dublin is 18s. per ton, and that to Dublin it is 18s. 9d.—Yes.

29344. Were the conditions the same in both cases?—The conditions were absolutely the same.

29345. Are you sure of that?—Yes.

29346. Including collection and delivery, or from station to station?—From station to station in each case.

29347. You have to cart the tallow in Dublin?—Yes; and it has to be delivered to the railway company in New Ross.

29348. What action did you take on that?—After the railway company told us they could not reduce the rate we wrote them we considered it a very excessive rate, and said we would place the matter be-

fore the Railway Commission. About three weeks after having done this, we received a notification from the railway company that they had reduced the rate to 12s. 4d. per ton from New Ross to Dublin.

29349. Of course, you draw the conclusion that the reduced rate was given to you in consequence of your threat to bring the matter before the Commission?—That was the only conclusion we could come to.

29350. What company was it?—The Dublin and South Eastern.

29351. Do you do any business in the Counties Cork and Kerry?—We do. We did a small business down there originally. We tried to open a trade down there in edible fats and also in the soap trade, but particularly in edible fats.

29352. That is, from there to Dublin?—No; from Dublin to Cork and County Cork. Of course it was in small quantities, as the trade was an opening one in Ireland; and we found that the rate charged would be equal on the deliveries to 58s. a ton.

29353. As you say, it was a small transaction, and the staff was carried at the small parcels rate?—Yes.

29354. Under that scale?—Under that scale.

29355. Therefore, do you think it quite fair to calculate it at so much per ton?—If about 3 cwt., what would the rate have been?—It would have been from 4 to 20 cwt. 30s. 2d. to Skibbereen, which we consider a very excessive rate. It is hopeless to attempt business on such rates as these.

29356. What was the result?—We wrote about that, but 30s. 2d. is the lowest rate obtainable on these goods. We did not bother any further about it.

29357. You could not carry on any trade on these figures?—No. It amounted, really, on small deliveries to 2s. a cwt., and the goods are not expensive. Their value is 30s. a cwt. It is not like butter, which is 1s. a lb., or, roughly, 100s. per cwt.

29358. What do you mean by edible fats?—Some thing similar to margarine.

29359. A substitute for butter?—Hardly that. It is not used as margarine. It is used more by bakers in England; it is largely used by biscuit manufacturers for their cheaper grades. We ship a considerable amount of that to England. We manufacture it in Ireland, and ship it to England.

29360. With reference to cartage by the railway companies, have you anything to say about that?—Some time ago we got the Government contract—probably one of the largest Government contracts—for soap in Ireland. We had in the Government contracts and in the case of contracts for other institutions in Ireland that we have to deliver the goods not only at the station, but we have to cart them to the institution. So we asked

Complaints
as to excessive
rates for
tallow.—

New Ross to
Dublin, com-
pared with
the through
rate, New
Ross to
Liverpool
via Dublin

Ineffective
representa-
tion to the
Dublin and
South E. Iron
Company.

Subsequent
reduction of
the rate.—
New Ross to
Dublin, after
information
given to
Company that
the situation
of the New
Ross case
was would
be drawn to
the notice.

Oct. 16, 1907.

Mr. James
Greene,
Representative
of the
City of Dublin,
Dublin.

The influence
of the
Vice-Royal
Commission
in the settle-
ment of the
railways.

The Railway
Company's
desire to
encourage big
concessions
aligned with
the interests
of small
traders.

The German
State
"smalls"
rates dis-
approved.

The possibility
of control by
the law in a
low and
cheap of graded
suitable rates.

Mr. T. H.
Griffin,
M.P.,
Kilkee.

The State
Railways
of Western
Australia have
opened up the
Settlement of
the country.

29395. And that that corresponds with the reduction which has been generally demanded in evidence?—I did not notice that.

29396. Witnesses generally ask that the rates should be reduced somewhat. If this Commission should pass away without securing a decisive settlement of the Irish railway question do you think that concessions such as you obtained would also come to an end?—I should think that with the Commission sitting it helped greatly in procuring the reduction.

29397. Had the Commission not been sitting you would not have got the reduction?—I have no absolute proof of that, but I am rather inclined to think so.

29398. You mean that the information that you intended to report the matter did not produce the concession. You had actually to report the matter before the concession was made?—I wrote them that I would place the matter before the Commission. I had no further correspondence. I simply placed it before the Commission straight off.

29399. If there had been no Commission do you think that this concession by the railway company would be forthcoming?—I don't think so.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

29400. As a trader I suppose that you appreciate the advantages of doing business in wholesale quantities if you can?—Yes.

29401. It is much cheaper for you?—Yes.

29402. And much cheaper for the railways?—I do not know, but the extra rate charged on "smalls" should be remunerative.

29403. You quite understand their desire to encourage big consignments as much as possible?—Yes.

29404. Your point is, in the interest of the Irish trader you want the difference as little as possible?—Yes.

29405. In the interests of the railway company they naturally want it as big as possible?—Yes.

29406. There is always the conflict of interest?—Yes.

29407. What would you say to the German State system, where smalls mean anything under five tons?—You mean by smalls?

29408. You know what the railway company call smalls—anything under three cwt. For that they charge an extra rate. The German system is that anything under five tons is called smalls, and is 50 to 70 per cent. higher than anything over five tons?—No. It would hardly work here. Unless the railway rates in Ireland were reduced to the level of rates charged in Germany.

Examined by Lord Pinfold.

29409. If the rates were reduced to what you say you would like could you increase your traffic to double or treble what it is?—The rate on what goods?

29410. On the goods you speak of, tallow. You say you would like it 10s. Would the industry that you are interested in be doubled or trebled?—I could hardly say how much it would increase it, but it

would certainly facilitate it, and increase the business.

29411. Where do you get your fat from?—From Dublin and throughout the country.

29412. It is not imported and then worked up?—No. We bring some in here, and manufacture it, because the supply here is not as good and sufficient for the purposes of the soap trade.

29413. But your industry as it at present exists consumes all that there is in the locality, and, therefore, if you increase your industry it would have to be by the importation of foreign stuff?—Yes; but by that rate the Dublin and South-Eastern Company would rather tend to send the manufactured goods out of the country.

29414. I took it that you want to show that the railway companies would get double freight on bringing up the material which is worked up and then sent out from your works through Ireland or abroad; that they would therefore get a double traffic if they reduced the rate?—I don't know about the double traffic, but the cheapening of rates would tend to increase the trade considerably.

29415. They are bound to get it. If you use all that can be given by the district, and if they give you satisfactory rates to such an extent that you would have to import it, then they would get the rate into your particular works, and would also get the rate out of them?—Yes.

29416. That is your argument with the railway company?—Yes.

29417. Have you put that before them clearly?—No. It was more on the specific rates that I was going.

29418. Mr. Tallow.—There is one matter that I would like to mention in connection with the soap trade. It is a fact that in Ireland we charge lower rates than in England. Soap in the general classification is in the first-class. We made a concession to the soap traders in Ireland by reducing that generally over all the Irish railways to five per cent. one class C, which is a very substantial difference from Class 1, as you know, and of course that applies to small traders, too.

29419. Chairman.—The witness admitted that as far as the rates per ton per mile were concerned they bore a favourable comparison with the rates in England. His complaint is that the traffic is small, and that the consignments come under the small parcels scale.

Mr. Tallow.—The small trader is better treated than in England, too.

29420. Chairman.—The point of these people is practically that three cwt. is fair for England and two cwt. is fair for Ireland.

29421. Mr. Scroes.—The whole traffic of the Irish railway trade is affected in a different degree from the traffic of the English trader in the same commodity?—There is not the quantity of traffic passing of course.

Mr. Tallow.—Therefore, there is not the same remuneration to the railway.

29422. Mr. Scroes.—If it kills the trade altogether there can be no remuneration.

Mr. T. R. GREFFY, M.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

29423. I think you are a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers?—Yes.

29424. You come from Kilkenny, County Clare?—Yes.

29425. I think you have had considerable experience in connection with railways in Western Australia and Victoria?—Yes.

29426. Therefore you are acquainted with the working of State-owned railways?—Yes.

29427. Were you engaged in connection with the surveys of some of these railways out there?—Yes.

29428. We shall be glad to have your views on this matter. Tell us, shortly, what effect have the railways of Western Australia had on the natural advantages and industries of the country?—They opened up the industries altogether. It would be a wilderness without the railways. They simply made the country.

29429. The railways really made the country?—Yes. The mining industry when I went there in 1880 was hampered altogether. Stone that used to produce two ounces to the ton was not able to be got away to the crushing machinery, and machinery

could not be got in; and the whole thing, in fact, was brought about by the railways.

29430. From your experience in the colonies are you of opinion that the railways owned by the State are efficiently and economically managed?—Certainly. I consider that they are very efficiently managed.

29431. And will compare with privately owned railways in other countries?—Yes, I think so. They are doing very well. Although they were built originally more to develop the country than for any other reason they are now paying very well both in Victoria, Western Australia, and elsewhere. The Great Southern line in Victoria was a line that opened up a regular wilderness, in which fifty years after the colony was established the best land was lying idle for the want of a railway communication.

29432. Were you connected with that?—Yes. I laid out that line.

29433. Where did it run from?—From Melbourne to Port Albert, through a very fertile forest that was a wilderness that everybody was afraid to have any

thing to do with. One of the things it opened up was a coal mine. In fact it was by careful location that we got the line up to the top of the ridge where the coalfields were, and I see by the Australian hand-book that in 1930 they put out 250,000 tons of coal in that year, which but for the particular way the railway was laid out, would have never been prospecting and never opened up, and would have been useless without it. It was the specially low rates that fostered the coal industry, which was not previously in Victoria at all. They got all their coal from New South Wales at the time.

29431. Was that railway projected by private enterprise?—Altogether by the Government. It never would have paid any private company.

29432. No private capitalist would have put his money into it?—None whatever. In Western Australia they gave large concessions of land at first. The Midland Railway of Australia got 22,000 acres of land for every mile of railway that they made. The consequence was that they made the railways as long as possible, winding them about everywhere. They did not attend to the gradients, and the lines were not safe.

29433. They got concessions in the same way as the Canadian Pacific Railway. Those lines are becoming ultimately very profitable?—Afterwards, when the Government took over the Western Australian lines, they had to re-grade the lines, which was a source of enormous expense. At one place, where there was a gradient of 1 in 28, we had to deviate the line 12 miles at a cost of £100,000, in order to alter the gradient.

29434. You know Ireland pretty well?—I cannot say I do; I know the Southern part of it.

29435. At any rate you have been?—Yes.

29436. Do you think there are districts in Ireland that could be developed by additional railways?—I think the tourist traffic in the part of the country I am in could be made most profitable for the country generally if something was done in inducing tourists to come across the Shannon—say there was a railway from Limerick to Talbot, and proper steamer communication—an immense number of tourists who come to Killybegs would go across to see the beautiful scenery of the Cliffs of Glare, and so on.

29437. But there is no inducement for private people to make such railways?—No.

29438. The only way of getting them constructed is by assistance from some source or other?—Certainly. The Government of Australia generally recognises that.

29439. From your experience in Australia do you think some similar system might be adopted with advantage in this country with regard to the whole of the railways?—Yes. Taking over the railways I think would be a most splendid thing.

29440. What would be your anticipations from that?—In the first place, I think the management would be greatly improved, because, of course, you cannot expect that small railways can be managed as well as larger ones which have larger staffs of men to do their special work, and can always choose good men from here and put them there, and manage lines in that way.

29441. There could be concentration of management?—Yes. From my experience in Australia, I think things were far more efficiently managed in that way than is the case in the management of little lines.

29442. Do you remember in the early days in Australia whether political influences were brought to bear so as to favour certain districts?—Yes. When I first went to Australia in 1881 there were a great many complaints about that. In Victoria they borrowed a lot of money to make railways, and political influence was brought to bear by different members of Parliament, who at the time had particular influence with the Ministry, but that was done away with to a great extent by the appointment of the Railway Commissioners, who were started in Victoria, and afterwards adopted in all the Colonies. These Commissioners were more or less independent of the different Governments.

29443. That was about 1865?—About 1864. Mr. Spaight was the first man brought over.

29444. Up to 1864 there was political influence used, which caused a good deal of dissatisfaction with the manner in which the railways were

managed?—Yes. There were certain lines that afterwards turned out failures.

29445. And you think an arrangement took place after the appointment of the Commissioners?—Yes. It was a step in the right direction.

29446. These Commissioners are independent of political influence?—Yes.

29447. They manage the railways for the benefit of the district or of the country?—Yes; of the country generally.

29448. To the advantage of the country?—Decidedly.

29449. That system has been continued up to the present time?—Yes.

29450. With the same satisfactory result?—Yes, as far as I know.

29451. Do you think such an arrangement in this country would be an advantage to this country?—Certainly I do.

29452. You have no hesitation about that?—No hesitation. In my opinion it would be the greatest advantage.

29453. From your experience of the Colonies, in Australia, having been connected with these railways, you are strongly of opinion that it would be to the general advantage of the people all round if the same system were adopted with regard to the railways here as has been adopted in Australia?—I am.

Examined by Mr. SEYMOUR

29454. The railway mileage of Ireland pretty closely corresponds with that of an Australian State?—I think so. Victoria has about 3,500 now.

29455. There are three or four of the six Australian States which have a railway mileage approximately equal to that of Ireland?—Yes; New South Wales has about the same, close on 4,500 miles, I believe. The others have not so much.

29456. Therefore the successful management in the several States, each of its own lines under a united system, and as a public service supplies a very close and apt lesson for the case of Ireland?—I should say so.

29457. Although Ireland is a very old country and Australia is a very new one, there is this parallel between them, from the point of view of the present inquiry, that the great need of each of them is development?—Exactly.

29458. And development has proceeded in Australia by the help of these public lines, and is progressing satisfactorily?—Yes, both in railways and in other ways. The Government prospect for coal and keep diamond drills and that sort of thing going, and they open up all sorts of industries and the natural advantages of the country.

29459. Incomparably the most powerful agent in starting and increasing progress has been the working of the transit system in each State as a united system in the public hands?—Yes, certainly.

29460. We have sometimes heard that expert evidence in Ireland is opposed to the nationalisation and public purchase of the railways, whilst popular opinion is in its favour. We have had a great deal of expert evidence in relation to this subject in Ireland?—I think the Government have no staff of experts, and of course experts generally are connected with interested corporations. I don't know whether that would have anything to say to it or not.

29461. You think the experts are more or less connected with the railways?—Yes. You would have to get some outside expert evidence.

29462. And the only perfectly unbiased expert evidence on this question would be by one of the Government experts?—Disinterested experts of any kind.

29463. I fear that reference to Government experts would not inspire very much confidence in Ireland. In the matter of coalfields there is also an interesting parallel between the case of Ireland and that of Australia. You have shown that one line developed an enormous coal traffic which otherwise would have been non-existent?—Yes.

29464. We have the case in Ireland both of worked coal mines cramped for the want of railway accommodation and enormous coalfields never tapped. Do you think one of the first effects of a united system of railways in Ireland would be that these coal deposits would be made available for the use of the country?—I think so. I think if they were under State management there would be experts who would be in

Oct. 16, 1907

Mr. T. R. Griffin,
M.B.E.C.E.,
Belfast.

The adoption
of the
Australian
system of
administering
the railways
recommended.

The parallel
between the
Australian
Colonies and
Ireland is the
matter of
railway
development.

The develop-
ment of the
ministry of
the Colonies
largely due
to the system
of State-
owned rail-
ways.

The proba-
bility of
developing
the coalfields
and other
industries
in Ireland
under a State
controlled
system of
railways.

On 16, 1907.
Mr. T. R.
Giffels,
M. Inst. C.E.,
Kilkee.

The necessity
for considering
public
enterprises
than private
profit to
ensure a
satisfactory
traffic
system.

The inter-
ference of
political in-
fluence with
the policy
of State
owned rail-
ways would
be no greater
than in the
case of
privately-
owned lines.

The system
of State
ownership
and central-
isation of
control of
railways tends
to efficiency
and economy.

The transfer
of the rail-
ways to an
independent
Irish authority
would ensure
some-
what
reference,
extension,
and reduced
rates.

blamed, and they would be sent to report on the probable paying to the country generally of developing the coal mines and other industries, such as the tourist traffic, and everything that would do the country good, and they would not look to the immediate profit of the line, but would look to whether it would develop the country or not.

29465. Instead of following private profit and regarding the public interest as quite secondary, when the public interest is considered first, the public results are certain to be superior.—Exactly.

29466. Another suggestion against public ownership is that political influence would be brought to bear unduly, the implication being apparently that there is no questionable influence connected with private enterprise. Is that a just inference?—I don't think so. I think that private enterprises are naturally conducted for the good of certain people, to make as much money as they can out of it without any consideration for the public benefit.

29467. Just because they are private enterprises there may be influence connected with them, just as much open to critical comment, or more open to it, as any that will occur under a system worked in the light of public opinion?—I should say so.

29468. At any rate, in Victoria, when it was found that political influence was being worked against the general interests of the community, they had no difficulty in dealing with the matter?—No difficulty. I never heard of reasonable complaints after the appointment of the Commissioners to take over the management of the railways or political influence. What a new line was projected by interested persons the Commissioners were asked to report on it to Parliament. After due consideration by the experts and getting all information that was to be obtained, the Commissioners reported whether they thought the line would be advantageous or not, and when they got that report Parliament acted on it. Public opinion was too strong to allow them to go against the Commissioners' report.

29469. The cases of these Australian States in relation to railways are sometimes mentioned as if they were proof that public ownership necessarily entails some deleterious political effects. Would you say, on the contrary, that what the case of Victoria proves and what is established by the case of the other States, is that though evils may temporarily arise in connection with systems of public control, that the public authority is perfectly well able to deal with these evils in the public interest?—Certainly.

29470. Do you think if a critical question arose in Ireland public opinion would be equally competent?—I think so.

29471. Another of the numerous pretences offered on this question, as if they were incontestable facts, is this, that enterprises carried on by private hands are, as it were, necessarily more efficiently and more economically conducted than those which are in public hands. Does your great practical experience bear that out?—Not at all. I consider the Victorian railways under the management of the Commissioners as perfect as anything could be. There was no strike or anything of the kind in any time. The public servants were well treated and well paid, and, on the contrary, a great deal was enacted from them in the way of work.

29472. On the other hand, railways privately made were wastefully made and badly made?—Wastefully made and badly made in Australia.

29473. Railways made by the public were economically and well made?—Yes.

29474. The two needs in Ireland are that the transit system should be perfected by links, branches, and feeders, and that the rates should be reduced. So you anticipate that a system worked by an Irish authority would give these results?—Yes.

29475. You consider that an Irish authority should be independent?—Yes.

29476. That is to say, you think the authority should be in the hands of the community where the railways run?—Certainly.

29477. Any other would be unreasonable?—I think so. Of course they have an opportunity of watching the success of the system, and any grievances that are noticed are brought to the proper quarter, where they can be dealt with.

29478. It is admitted that the necessary branches, feeders, and links will not be made in Ireland by the companies or by private capital?—No.

29479. Is there any other way in which you can get them made except by an Irish authority using the general resources, considering the transit system as one, making lines wherever they ought to be made, without laying any levy on the district?—I don't think so; there must be public support, money advanced from the State. The Imperial Government appear to be able to raise money a great deal cheaper by Consols than anything that has an Irish name.

29480. Speaking of the capital of the companies and the rates which they have on their systems, do you see any possibility of a reduction in rates, such as public roads require, except by the application of public credit to the purchase of the lines and by the saving which united working would secure?—I don't think so. I don't think it ought to be expected. I think the lines naturally do as well as they can for their shareholders—that is human nature generally.

29481. We are asked by the Lord Lieutenant to report what would be the most efficient, economical, and harmonious system of railways in Ireland. You have already said that, in your opinion, there is no comparison in point of efficiency and in point of economy between a number of private systems and a public system?—Yes.

29482. It seems to follow obviously that there would be more harmony in a united public system than in the case of a number of companies contending with each other?—I think so.

Examined by Mr. A. WHELAN.

29483. If you spend new capital on making new lines somebody has got to pay interest on it?—Yes.

29484. If the line does not pay the public have got to pay through taxation?—Yes, but I think that the public generally get a great deal more benefit from lines than the actual payment of a dividend.

29485. You think it is good business for the State to put money into a railway system if it does not get a direct return because it gets an indirect one?—I think so.

29486. In your evidence you are contemplating taxation of the people in Ireland in subsidy of the railway rates and charges?—Yes, unless we get it back as part of the over-taxation we have paid.

29487. When you went to Victoria what it wanted was new railways to develop a country that had not got any?—It wanted more railways, feeders mostly.

29488. There were many places that had not got railways within 100 miles of them?—No. There was hardly any part of Victoria that was not within a hundred miles of a railway. The Great Southern line was the only main line made during the twelve years that I was in the railway department there.

29489. What distance shall we say—50 or 30 miles away?—Yes.

29490. Of course railways are very much closer in Ireland now than they were in Victoria?—Yes.

29491. The proposition here is mainly a question of developing traffic on existing railways rather than making new railways?—Yes.

29492. There is no suggestion here of making new trunk lines?—No.

29493. So they are not quite the same propositions. I heard you speak of specially low rates. Do you suggest that the rates in Victoria are specially low?—Comparatively.

29494. Do you know that they kept on mile statistics and don't dare to publish them because they are so high?—No. I think questions in Parliament can always be asked and are always being asked about everything on the railways.

29495. Do you know that is a positive fact, that the railway department does keep on mile statistics and does not venture to publish them?—I think they are published in the Victorian Year Book.

29496. No, they are not published. You say that political interference has been done away with a great deal?—Yes; I think so, by the Commissioners.

29497. You were there in 1864?—Yes.

29498. When did you come home?—I came home in 1866.

29499. Was it in your time that those lines near Melbourne were shut up because they did not pay their working expenses?—No. It was not in my time. I don't think there was a line shut in the whole of Victoria in my time.

29500. You know there were a good many lines near Melbourne that were not very profitable?—There was one line about which there was a good deal of complaint that it did not pay.

28501. You are not aware that since your day Mr. Matheson shut up one because it did not pay and carried the rails away?—No. I have only heard that in connection with Irish railways.

28502. The Railway Commissioners gave up the line and not the public?—It may not have been the Commissioners who made that line. There were complaints under the old system that there were unsuitable lines built before the Commissioners came there.

28503. *Chatterbox*.—And unnecessary lines?—Yes.

28504. Mr. Jeacock. Should I be wrong in saying that long after the time when the Commission system was introduced, the Melbourne newspapers, the *Age* and the rest of them constantly charged political influence against the work of the department?—The *Age* newspaper always took up everything against officials generally, and that sort of thing. That was the policy of the paper, but I don't think that any of the other newspapers did, the *Argus* or any of them.

28505. The *Age* is one of the leading papers?—It is the great democratic paper.

28506. Should I be wrong if I said that constant complaints were published year after year of the way the political influence did control the Commission?—I deny the *Age* newspaper made those assertions.

28507. But in your view there was no ground for them?—I don't think there was any ground. I never saw any during my long experience with them.

28508. I want to get it on the notes, because you stated earlier you never heard of complaints?—I quite understand you do not believe them, but complaints were made?—I don't think it would be correct to say they were true. They may have been in the *Age* newspaper, which was always finding flaws' notes in every direction, but I don't think in any other paper.

28509. It was always finding them?—Mere's notes.—Yes.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Pol.

28510. With regard to this question of State ownership and State management, am I right in saying that the history of the Australian Commonwealth in the early days dates prior to 1887, when Commissioners—with the exception of Victoria, where they were appointed in 1883—were appointed to look after the railways, was one of direct State administration of the railways?—Yes.

28511. The result of that was there was neither economy nor efficient administration?—I don't think that at all. I think they were very well administered. The great complaint was in regard to the construction of new railways.

28512. They were very extravagant. There was great complaint and that is the reason the Commissioners were introduced, to check the great extravagance and unnecessary expenditure?—Not so much in the working of the railways as in the construction of new railways. Members of Parliament for different places having political influence with the Government tried to get lines through their districts. That was the petriolous reason pointed out.

28513. That was the point that was made, that the system did not conduce either to economy or efficiency?—No.

28514. With a view to obviating these defects the Railway Commissioners were introduced into the different States?—Yes.

28515. Am I right in saying that the result of that change was to effect a very great improvement in Victoria?—I believe that after Mr. Spaight and his colleagues were introduced, economies to the extent of £70,000 a year were introduced in a very short time?—Yes.

28516. Similarly in New South Wales. The Commissioners there came into being in 1888. Within four years the net earnings had increased by 35 per cent and the working expenditure had been reduced from something like 55 to 34 per cent?—I can hardly credit such great improvement, but it was extremely large.

28517. Not only were those economies and increased savings brought about without any increase, but rather with a reduction both in passenger and goods rates?—Yes. I think a great deal was due to the very efficient men who were got—Mr. Spaight and Mr. Eddy—who both were great railway lights.

28518. One example of the Commissioners is that they must be very strong men.—Yes, and have a great knowledge of the technical part of railway work.

28519. And also to be not likely to be influenced by political pressure?—Yes, and I think that is one of the great reasons that the effect of the Railway Commissioners was so beneficial. With one good man at the head of affairs he saw that everything was done properly, whereas with a number of little ones you cannot expect all the managers to be very talented.

28520. Would your experience of the working of different railways in Australia lead you to say that if, in the event of the unification of Irish railways, somebody were placed in charge of them, that body should be made up of the very best men who could be got, both from the railway and the public point of view, and should be made independent as far as possible of political pressure, and from any influence or superior authority short of that which was necessary to secure thorough responsibility?—In Ireland I think that would be necessary, and with that proviso I think there can be no doubt that unification of the railways under a central authority would be an advantage.

28521. I think you said there were no strikes. Was not there a strike on the Victorian lines in 1903?—I was not in Victoria in 1903.

28522. I think there was a strike at that time. It has often been urged as an objection to a State system that the employees of such a system would be apt to make themselves very objectionable, and could demand any terms they liked, and if those terms were not granted would strike to enforce them. I believe there was a strike in Victoria in 1903 on very much the same grounds as the threatened strike now before us in England. The Premier of Victoria practically refused to allow the employees of the railway to be connected with the trades union, and they struck, and, finding that the public did not come to their support, the strike collapsed in a very short time, showing that where they had a firm man to deal with, and where the public came to the rescue of the authorities, there was very little danger to be feared from a strike. The principle on which the Australian railways are worked appears to differ from that on which the State railways on the Continent are worked. On the Continent it is not a fact that they are worked more or less with the view of making a profit for the State?—I know very little about the Continent.

28523. At any rate in Australia, they are worked with a view to benefiting and developing the country, and are content with simply earning sufficient to pay a small interest on the capital outlay?—Yes. At first when they brought the coal from this particular place I was talking of, they mined it at the actual cost price. In order to develop the coal industry they carried it for what it cost the railway to bring the coal over the line.

28524. From what you know of Australia, I gathered from your answers to my colleagues that you don't see any prospect of a great reduction in rates and fares unless it comes through some unification and control by the State, and you also say that, in your opinion, the profits of a railway can be expended in no better way than in bringing about reductions in general goods and passenger fares, which would be for the benefit of the people of the Country?—Certainly.

Examined by Lord Pirbright.

28525. When a line is laid out in Australia is there any special levy from the district that is improved by having the line made, or is it made at the expense of the State?—There is no local guarantee.

28526. None at all?—None.

28527. Therefore the people in the district who actually gain by the railway pay nothing more than people who live 300 or 500 miles off?—It is understood that by developing a new district they improve Melbourne, and improve the State generally.

28528. It is taken as a whole?—It is taken as a whole.

28529. That is what you advocate for Ireland—that railway extensions should be made by the country as a whole, and that the local people should not have to pay anything extra?—Yes. I think that transit generally is a subject for the whole community.

28530. Some previous witnesses have said that in case of a consolidation of the railways of Ireland, they rather feared it would be hard to get a good man, that a good many would not go to the Government. Evidently from your experience in Australia

Oct. 16, 1907.

Mr. T. R. Griffin,
Minister of Railways,
Melbourne.

The adoption in Ireland of the Australian system of control of the railways by Councils of State, purchased, recommended.

The danger of strikes on State-owned lines no greater than on privately-owned railways.

The unification and State control of the Irish railways seems needed as a necessary preliminary to a reduction in rates and fares.

Railway extensions in Ireland by the country as a whole recommended without local guarantee.

Oct. 19, 1907.

Mr. T. R. Griffin,
Minister of Railways,
Dublin.

The courtesy of men of ability being available to manage a State-controlled railway.

you have no such fear?—I have not. I think quite the contrary is the case. I think that Government officials generally are coaxed in this country and everywhere else. I think they get very good bargains, and they can choose their men afterwards.

29534 Do you consider the Commissioners acted wisely when a line was no use, or, having been laid down for some reason, was found afterwards not to be desirable in making use of the rails and sleepers to develop other districts to greater advantage?—Yes.

29535 Therefore, you see nothing wrong in taking up the old line?—No, except that a mistake had been made.

29536 Instead of leaving them to wear out, they acted wisely in removing these rails and sleepers, and putting them elsewhere?—Yes.

29537 Chairman—That is done in England.

29538 Mr. Ascroft—I did not say it was wrong. I thought it the right thing to do, but under the circumstances the question was whether it was right to put them down in the first instance.

29539 Lord Parnell—Who appoints the Commissioners now—is it Parliament?—The Minister of the time.

29540 Chairman—The Minister of Public Works?—The Minister of Railways.

29541 It is Public Works and Railways?—Not in Victoria. There is a Minister of Railways. I think the Minister makes the appointment, but it is done automatically by the Cabinet.

29542 Lord Parnell—Are the members appointed practically for life in the ordinary course?—From the time of the appointment I think it is very hard to get rid of them. I think the term is five years.

29543 Chairman—They don't make appointments other than for a term?—No.

Mr. Telford—I can now clear up that matter about the rate on tallow in casks from New Ross. The demand for the 12s. 5d. rate was a mistake, as the special rate of 12s. 6d. has been in force since 1905.

29544 Chairman—Why did not the railway company reply at once to the complaint stating so?

Mr. Telford—Mr. Coghlan says: "I find that this arrangement was increased at close rate of 12s. 5d. per ton, though a special rate of 12s. 6d. has been in force. As very little of this traffic was at this time

Method of appointment of the Victorian Railway Commissioners and their term of office.

Explanation by Dublin and South Eastern Railway Company as to New Ross tallow rates (See Question No. 29491.)

Mr. M. J. Nagle, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association.

Complaint as to charges for half-wagon rates for cattle.

Increase in the number allowed for a half-wagon aged.

29644 Mr. Nagle, I think you appear on behalf of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association?—Yes, sir.

29645 Is that an important association?—Oh, very important.

29646 And the cattle trade, of course, we know, is a very important industry in Ireland?—It practically represents half the trade of Ireland.

29647 Yes, of course, know the system of charging full wagon rates and half wagon rates, and rates per head, and so on?—Yes.

29648 I gather it is the principle you object to rather than the details?—Certainly.

29649 Just give us the views of your Association on that subject?—The railway company make a charge for what they call a part-wagon, and we call it a half-wagon. We can load on an average nine fat cattle in a wagon. For a half-wagon load, for which they charge three-fourths of the whole cost of the wagon, we are only allowed four beasts, which we consider a hardship.

29650 Mr. Telford—Two-thirds, not three-fourths?—Excuse me, two-thirds.

29651 Chairman—That is to say the half-wagon rate is two-thirds of the whole wagon rate?—Two-thirds of the full cost.

29652 What is your suggestion?—That we should be allowed to load five beasts on a half-wagon at one-half the cost of the whole wagon.

29653 What do you state is a full wagon load?—Ten?—Nine.

29654 You do not load more than nine, but, of course, there are different sized wagons?—Not on the Irish lines here.

29655 What length are they—sixteen feet?—I do not know the exact length.

29656 Is it sixteen?—

Mr. Neale (Manager, G.S. and N.E.)—13 feet 10 inches to 15 feet 2 inches.

29657 Chairman—They are all generally alike, are they?

passing, the invoice overlooked the special rate. The receiving station also failed to detect the overcharge. Messrs. Green complained, and I unfortunately declined the application for a reduction, as my rule-book had no record of the special figure of 12s. 6d. I subsequently discovered that the letter was in fact, and refunded complainant 3s. 6d. overcharged. So, though there have been mistakes in connection with it, the rate has been in force all the time.

29540 Lord Parnell—Did they return the overcharge on previous consignments?

Mr. Green—That was the first consignment.

Mr. Telford—This is the explanation of the station master—"Owing to no traffic having passed for considerable time, clerk invoiced at high rate, forgetting at the time special rate." The special rate has been in force since the 5th of June, 1905. It is the special rate for tallow in casks.

29541 Chairman—It is charged up now; but Mr. Green's natural conclusion was that the reduction was given on account of the existence of the Commission, Mr. Green—Yes.

29542 Lord Parnell—If you had not made the complaint?

29543 Mr. Neale—There were three stages in this matter.—First, Messrs. Green made a complaint; second, they intimated that they would report the matter to the Commission; and third, they did so. I do not know if it is the Commission. Nothing was done during those three stages. What time elapsed between the report to the Commission and the objection?

Mr. Green—Roughly, about a fortnight.

Mr. Telford—The objection was made on the 3rd of April, 1907.

29544 Chairman—We will say that the clerk, the station-master, and the whole of them blundered over that matter?

Mr. Telford—Unfortunately, there was a mistake in the rate book in Mr. Coghlan's office in Dublin also.

29545 Chairman—That clears the matter up, and the explanation will appear on the notes of the same day's proceedings. You are satisfied with it, Mr. Green?

Mr. Green—Yes.

Mr. M. J. Nagle examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Neale—They are not exactly alike.

29558 How many are you allowed to load?—What I was about to add was that we would be willing to agree to four fat cattle for half-wagon, provided we were only charged half the cost of the whole wagon for same.

29559 Nine fat cattle are allowed for a full wagon?—Yes.

Mr. Telford—They often only hold eight. There are a great many cases in which they only hold eight, and sometimes only seven.

29560 Chairman—Then the suggestion is that the half-wagon should have five beasts. That five beasts should be allowed to be put into the wagon at half the wagon rate?—Yes.

29561 And that half of the full wagon rate should be charged instead of two-thirds?—Yes.

29562 What about insurance?—That is one of the great grievances we labour under. When we hand our stock over to the railway companies, we are practically at their mercy. If our beasts are delayed, and if they are injured, in consequence of the delay, or are killed on the wagon, or if any of them get diseased, we have no compensation whatever and no remedy, and the railway company disclaim any responsibility, no matter what condition they deliver our cattle in. I suggest that the present rates are fully high enough, and that railway companies should be compelled to insure cattle on the rail; and till that is done we, in the cattle trade, will be completely at their mercy.

29563 Can you not insure outside?—Of course, we can insure; but that would be an extra charge that the cattle trade could not bear. Surely we have enough to do at the present time to hold our own in the face of the foreign competition we are encountering, where we have to fight against preferential import rates, given for the dumping down of foreign meat and merchandise into this country, and local high rates. That is enough for us to contend against

without going to the extra charge of insuring our cattle, which we could not afford to do at all and keep our trade going.

Mr. Toffin.—There is no foreign meat that comes in at all at through rates into Ireland.

23564 *Chairman*.—He is speaking of cattle going into England and of dead meat coming into England. I understood what he meant. Now, Mr. Nagle, in other words, to put it into plain language, what your Association mean is that, that instead of the cattle being carried at owner's risk, it should be carried at the company's risk?—Precisely.

23565 Is not that what you meant?—Exactly.

23566 Your Association think that the rates all ready charged in Ireland are sufficiently high to cover the risk?—Certainly.

Mr. Toffin.—There is a little misapprehension there. The cattle rates in Ireland usually are not at the owner's risk, but at the ordinary risk, for we have as owner's risk with respect to cattle in Ireland. It is only the cross-Channel trade which in regard to the sea journey has two rates, the ordinary rate and the owner's risk rate. The rate in Ireland is only one rate.

23567 *Chairman*.—I will put another question to Mr. Nagle. In this association which you represent, are you dealing with cattle moved from place to place in Ireland, or with cattle exported to England?—I am principally engaged in the exporting of cattle to England.

23568 Then you refer to the difference in the existing rates there—to the sea risk. Do you contend that the contracting railway company in Ireland should take the whole of the risk, I will not say from door to door, but from station to station?—Certainly.

23569 Including the sea risk?—What I mean to cover is, that when the steamer reaches its destination the insurance ceases, and if the animal is able to walk ashore and subsequently dies, either at port or during a further journey by rail, we receive no compensation. The sea insurance is a *locus*. We have no protection whatever.

23570 Mr. Serfen.—Because the insurance conditions exclude what are the actual causes of loss?—Certainly.

23571 *Lord Pirrie*.—It is only a sea risk insurance. It has nothing to do with the railway. It is only a sea risk?—A sea risk, yes.

23572 *Chairman*.—We see the views of your Association with regard to that. Now what is the date at which lambs become sheep, according to the scale of charges?—They are charged on the 1st of September.

23573 *Lord Pirrie*.—No matter when they are born?—No matter when they are born; and the most of our lambs are not weaned till the month of March and they are charged as sheep when they are six months old. So we are charged the sheep rate for lambs when they should not commence till six months afterwards.

23574 *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—A lamb does not become a sheep till it is six months old?—Till it is twelve months old; and we are charged at the sheep rate for a lamb when it is only six months old. A lamb is not a sheep till it is fully twelve months old, and it puts out what are called hogget's teeth, which any man in the trade knows easily; and it is very distinct. I am largely engaged in the sheep trade, and it is a cause of great loss to me personally. I export a great number of sheep, and I have a great many half wagens, and I am only allowed from this month fifteen lambs for half a wagon, instead of twenty.

23575 *Chairman*.—Do you know whether the same rule applies in England?—It does, I believe.

23576 Are the lambs earlier in England than in Ireland?—It is an accepted fact that 50 per cent. of our lambs are not weaned until the 1st of March, therefore, we consider it is quite illegal to charge sheep freight for them on the 1st of September.

23577 It seems to be a tangible grievance. Have you represented this to the railway company?—Oh, several times.

23578 *Wells*.—We found it absolutely no good to write to the railway company about any grievance. We find we get no redress. They simply acknowledge our letters, and that is about the best we hear of it.

Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—This particular complaint was put before the Great Southern and Western Company by the Department in January this year.

23579 *Chairman*.—What Department?

Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—The Department of Agriculture. And the Great Southern Company's reply to the Department was that the same regulation was enforced on the English railways, and they did not see their way to making any change.

23580 Mr. Toffin.—It has been so often stated in this room before the Commission that it is the habit of the railway companies to acknowledge letters and not reply to them that I should like to give that, from my experience, a flat contradiction. Letters are always answered after they have been inquired into?—If I suggest anything that is not the fact I regret it, but I have had a number of communications that have only been acknowledged. I can give specific cases in which we received only acknowledgments of these.

23581 *Chairman*.—I suppose you have not got any proof of that here?—No, I have not, unfortunately, because the question did not arise. This was patent to us all, at least in the cattle trade.

23582 At what date do you suggest a lamb should become a sheep?—The 1st of January—the new year following after they are weaned.

23583 Mr. Aschcroft.—Then they would be, on an average, nine months old?—Yes; nine months. We are willing to concede that to the company—nine months—in order to be friends with them.

23584 *Chairman*.—What is the minimum number of cattle wagons the Irish railway companies will convey as a special train?—Well, that is a very vexed question to answer. Sometimes they give us a special train for eight wagons, and on occasions, for instance, at a large fair held some time ago in Tipperary town, they refused to give a special train to Cork with eleven wagons.

23585 And there is no rule on the subject?—There is no rule; and our association think that to require eight wagons is too much, and that the railway company should give us a special train with six wagons when the journey is over forty miles, so as to have long haulage.

23586 Do you suppose that the custom varies with the various companies, or is it the same with all the companies?—It is generally the same for all the lines.

23587 You said you were refused a special on one occasion?—Yes, on the Great Southern line, for eleven wagons.

23588 But you have had a special for eight?—Yes.

23589 And that was on the same line?—Yes, the same line—the Great Southern and Western.

23590 Now, do you not think that ten wagons would be a reasonable figure?—Well, it all depends on the haulage.

23591 Well, let us suppose about fifty miles?—Well, I say eight wagons would be very reasonable.

23592 If the traffic had to be carried about fifty miles?—We will say forty miles. I think that haulage is quite long enough, and if the railway companies are not inclined to give us more accommodation we will not be able to keep on the cattle trade here.

23593 The cattle trade looks growing?—That is not my recollection, certainly.

23594 It is up and down, but generally up?—Generally down, sir, the cattle trade.

23595 Mr. Serfen.—The heaviest decline we had in the last report of the Agricultural Department was in cattle?—Yes.

Mr. Toffin.—I think the 1906 figures are in now, and they are up.

23596a *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—Sheep are down; cattle up.

23596b Mr. Serfen.—The fall in 1906 was very heavy.

Mr. Toffin.—But I think 1906 shows considerable improvement.

23596c *Chairman*.—Now, we all admit that your association is a very important association for this country?—Yes.

23597 Your association would suggest that ten trucks would be a reasonable thing, but you say eight?—Eight.

23598 If there are eight wagons of cattle to be carried a distance of forty miles from a single station you suggest that there should be a rule that such wagons should be carried by special train?—Certainly.

23599 If there is no ordinary train?—Oh, certainly.

23600 I mean in the absence of any ordinary train?

Oct. 24, 1907.
Mr. M. J. Nagle,
Representative
of the
South of
Ireland Cattle
Traders'
Association,
Audien taken
by the
Department of
Agriculture on
the subject of
lamb and sheep
rates without
effect.

The question
of special
cattle trains.

Suggestion
that the
Railway
Companies
should run a
special for six
wagons and
approve of
shipping stock.

Oct 16, 1907.

Mr. M. J. Nagle,
Representative
of the
South of
Ireland Cattle
Traders'
Association.

The substitution
of a cheap
load vehicle
for the
Railway and
Cattle
Commissioners
Court
recommended.

Complaints as to
the inefficient
arrangements
afforded by the
railway
company in the
loading and
unloading
of cattle.

Instances of
inefficiency of
work at Great
Southern and
Western
stations on
fair days.

A general
improvement
visible in the
transit of
cattle in the
last few years.

Alleged to
have been
brought about
by outside
pressure on
the railway
company.

Allegation that
the company
charges for
loading and
unloading in
their cattle
rates while
not performing
the service.

—Oh, certainly. Provided the ordinary train reaches its destination in time for shipment of stock.

29601. Now, we go on to the next subject. Why do you refer to the Board of Trade, as I see you do in this proof that I have got before me?—Well, I think there is a court, but, personally, I have had no experience of the Board of Trade.

29602. Then, I will not ask you about that. But of course you are right about the Railway and Canal Commissioners' Court?—Oh, yes; but it is too costly to be of any practical use to us.

29603. Too costly to be of any practical use to you, and I suppose that rather than face that court as at present constituted, you would submit to certain rates that you think unreasonable?—We have no alternative.

29604. But I suppose you would favour some kind of a public court—a remedy through some public department?—Oh, certainly.

29605. If a cheap and quick means could be arranged?—Of course.

29606. In this country?—Yes, sir.

29607. And, I suppose, with regard to the cattle that the members of your association send, they load themselves?—They always send themselves, and load themselves, without any assistance whatever from the railway servants.

29608. That is a condition of transit, is it not?—I do not believe it is. I believe the railway porters are supposed to help as in loading the cattle and unloading them. I believe they are paid for it.

29609. The railway company have to whitewash the wagons, and all that sort of thing?—Yes, they have. That is about the only thing they do not ask us to do.

29610. They clean the wagons themselves?—Yes; but I am informed that we are charged for some in the rate asked.

29611. But you think that they should assist in loading?—Certainly; it would avoid scenes of great confusion and unnecessary suffering to the animals if we had a sufficient staff of railway servants; but I believe that some of the railways are working short-handed. For instance, at Mallow Fair, I happened to be there, and there were only two railway porters, who evidently knew little or nothing about the business of loading and looking after live stock; and I spoke to the stationmaster, and he told me that some of them were engaged at Knockling. Some of the inspectors and people who would superintend the loading of the cattle were at Knockling Fair, and some were at another fair, and the fact remained, that for Mallow Fair the station was not sufficiently manned; and cattle suffer a lot by being bowled and all that sort of thing, where there is not a sufficient staff to see them loaded properly.

29612. There has been a great improvement in the last few years in the transit of cattle?—There has been a great improvement since the inception of our association, because up to that time cases occurred, and I have some of them here, that I can state, where cattle coming from fairs at Lismore, Abbeyside, and other places, were confined in the wagons seventeen or eighteen hours before they could get to Cork.

29613. That was exceptional?—It occurred repeatedly.

29614. You do not say that that is a general thing?—Oh, not now.

29615. You are speaking of what was?—Oh, of what was.

29616. Do you agree with what I asked just now, that on the whole the conditions of transit are very much improved in recent years?—They are improved only by the pressure brought by outsiders on the railway companies.

29617. And you attribute it to the pressure brought by your association?—Certainly.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON

29618. Do you always load and unload the cattle?—Yes.

29619. It is the invariable practice?—Yes.

29620. Does the rate charged include any charge for loading and unloading?—I am not quite clear on that point; I believe it does.

29621. Do you think that with the rate charged for conveyance there is included also a charge for loading and unloading?—I do, sir.

29622. You may take it from me that if the service

is not rendered the law does not allow the charge?—Yes.

29623. Has your association ever ascertained whether or not the rates which you pay include any charge, for services not rendered by the railway company?—Not to my knowledge.

29624. I should advise you to apply yourselves to that question?—We find it a hopeless task to apply to the railway companies, we are so disheartened by repeated failures with respect to transit, we are disheartened by so many failures.

29625. What is the strength of your association?—300 members.

29626. Living all through Munster?—Living all through Munster.

29627. And I suppose transacting the bulk of the cattle trade of the South of Ireland?—Yes, practically the whole of it.

29628. About the wagon rate, when you consign a fraction of a wagon load, do you ask that the rate for the fraction should be in the same proportion to the full rate, as the fraction is to the full wagon?—Yes, that is what we ask for.

29629. Well, it is very different from that now?—Oh, of course it is.

29630. You would be satisfied, perhaps, with a compromise. I mean that if the rate for the fraction approximated to the fraction itself you would not ask for precisely the same proportion?—No.

29631. For instance, as you say, you put nine barrels into a wagon, or, as Mr. Taffur says, eight, or sometimes seven?—I do not agree with those figures, seven or eight.

29632. I know, but taking these figures, would you say that two loads of cattle ought to be carried for a fourth of the wagon rate, or would you be satisfied with something more?—Yes, we would be satisfied with something more, that would be reasonable.

29633. It is sometimes urged that when you send a fraction of a wagon-load the railway company have to use a full wagon. That is no fault of yours?—No. In England, if they get a half wagon another man is allowed to make up the other portion of it. It is divided into two by a sliding bar.

29634. When the railway company say they have to use a full wagon, you can retort, "Let them fill it if they like."—Yes; that is so.

29635. Do you think that this question of imposing high rates for fractions of wagon loads tends to make small consignments too costly?—Certainly.

29636. And so to discourage the trade?—To discourage the trade and destroy competition.

29637. Now, after listening to your evidence, I have to ask you in what cases have you really got compensation for damage on the line?—Well, personally, I never got any compensation from the Great Southern and Western Railway Company for any loss.

29638. How long have you been in the trade?—About twenty years.

29639. Had you many losses in that time?—A great many losses.

29640. And no compensation?—I never got a penny.

29641. Never a penny?—Never a penny. No one to apply for it.

29642. What was the rate?—It was a rate made specially by the company for themselves for their own benefit.

29643. There is the company's risk rate and the owner's risk rate?—I mean the local company; for instance, if I have three or four beasts, and send one outside to Cork, say, from any station, and if anything happens those cattle in transit I won't be compensated a penny.

29644. You could not add anything to what you have already stated—that, in your twenty years' experience, you never got a penny compensation?—Never a penny.

29645. Does the rate purport to be the company's risk rate or the owner's risk rate?—The owner's risk rate.

29646. Mr. Taffur—That is not so?—If it is not the owner's risk rate why does not the railway company give compensation when any of our animals are injured?

Mr. Taffur—In fact there is no condition attached as to owner's risk.

Mr. Croker Harrington, Solicitor—It is the ordinary company's liability that attaches with regard

to animals; I know as a lawyer on the part of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

29644a. *Chairman*.—It is an extraordinary statement that has been made—that a man that has been in business for twenty years has never got a penny compensation.

29647. *Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor*.—I know I have often defended cases where we have been beaten and we have had to pay it—(Hilary).—Here is a case in point. On the 8th of March, 1906, five cattle were loaded, belonging to a member of our association, Mr. Laurence O'Keefe of Newmarket. They arrived at Kanturk ten minutes after, which is the time the train would take between Newmarket and Kanturk, and, after arriving at Kanturk, one of the beasts was dead. They were loaded in perfect condition. We applied to the railway company for the usual grant for the price of the beast—per guinea—and they absolutely repudiated any liability whatsoever. In the first letter, of course, we got the usual acknowledgment, but in the letter that was given in reply, after inquiries being made, it was suggested by the railway company that this cow was killed because, when passing under a bridge, the wagon was an uncovered one, which is against the Department's regulations, and that she got a fright and died. So that gentleman had to lose his ten guineas because the railway company had not their wagon covered.

29648. *Mr. Scobie*.—The cattle trade there is conducted under such conditions of transit that the ordinary company's liability mentioned by Mr. Croker Barrington is limited in such a way that the companies do escape liability.—Of course they do.

29649. Is there a letter from the railway company on that case?—Oh, yes, sir; we can produce it any time you wish.

29649a. You can send it to the Secretary.*

Mr. Neale.—I know the case. The animal was loaded at Newmarket for Kanturk, and there was no shock or anything, and when it arrived at Kanturk the animal was dead. There was nothing to show what killed it, and it could not have been anything on the railway that killed it. There was only the one train.

29650. *Chairman*.—What is the distance?

Mr. Neale.—Five miles—(Hilary).—The beast was examined by a veterinary surgeon in Cork, and he said that the beast died from great violence.

29651. *Lord Purvis*.—You did not apply to the Courts?—No; because it was useless to go to law with the railway company.

29652. *Mr. Scobie*.—Taking your evidence as it stands, does it matter whether there was one train or a hundred trains?—Certainly not.

29653. Or what might have happened; because in no case is compensation paid?—In no case.

29654. Can you say whether there are any cases amongst the other members of your Society in which they do get compensation?—I believe they do. Some of the members who are largely and extensively engaged in the trade, and I will mention them on the fingers of one hand, and they have peacefully a great control over the railways and the shipping companies. These men, I believe, will get compensation; but the little or smaller traders who help to make that healthy competition, without which our trade could not exist, never get any compensation whatsoever.

29655. *Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor*.—I should like to say that any case that comes to me is investigated on its merits.—We believe that the big men in our trade probably settle their claims, and have no need to be members of our association, but a man, like myself, working a small trade, can never get anything from them.

29656. *Mr. Scobie*.—Substantially you say that men of your class have to conduct this important trade on the condition that there is no compensation for damage?—Certainly.

29657. *Chairman*.—I think you say that case you mentioned is not your own case?—No, no.

29658. You have been in business twenty years?—Certainly.

29659. And you have had claims against the railway company?—Certainly.

29660. Can you not give as a case of your own within a recent period; within two years, say?—Well, not two years.

29661. Within three years or four years?—I can—four years.

29662. And that will be much better, for we shall then be dealing with your own case?—But this is a case typical of what is occurring every day.

29662a. We would rather have a case of your own. You stated that you have never had compensation for twenty years, and you must have a good many cases of your own?—And my father, who has been in the trade, that was his experience also.

29663. *Lord Purvis*.—He said it was useless to apply.

29663a. *Chairman*.—He will give us one of his own cases.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—And the case will be sent to us by the secretary, so that we may look at it.

29664. *Chairman*.—You may take it for granted that we will take no action till you have an opportunity of seeing it?—If I have not put in a claim it does not prove that I have not lost beasts of my own; but I think this case that I stated is a good one. We cannot get anything better to show the state of things that does exist. As against the Great Southern and Western Railway we are quite defenceless, we small traders.

29665. *Mr. Scobie*.—That is the point you persist in stating?—Yes.

29666. That you suffer loss and do not get compensation?—Yes; that is my case.

29667. It is difficult, you say, to pay the present rates and make a living?—Certainly. I do not know that there is anything more keen than the competition in the cattle trade. It is becoming more keen with foreign competition and preferential rates for meat coming into England and very high and excessive rates on Irish cattle to English and Scotch ports.

29668. We know that for the system of importing supplies of dead meat to Great Britain from abroad the rates are very favourable?—Yes.

29669. And I suppose you can tell us that the actual imports of dead meat into Great Britain in competition with Ireland have greatly increased within the last fifteen years?—Yes.

29670. Excessively increased?—Excessively increased.

29671. And that should restrict the competing trade in Ireland?—It should.

29672. If it had not progressed so far your trade would be extended?—Yes. If it were not for the excessive imports, instead of exporting £9,000,000 worth of cattle we could export double that amount.

29673. This country is capable of raising a far larger supply of cattle than it does now?—Well, of course, it is.

29674. And then you say that the rates press too heavily upon you, and that insurance ought to be provided by the railway companies?—Certainly.

29675. What percentage of the rate would the insurance be—could you insure the beasts for five per cent. of the rate?—Oh, no; I think that would be too high.

29676. You think that while you cannot afford any addition to the rate, that charge for insurance, relieving the railway companies of all claims, might very well be paid by them?—By including it certainly in the existing charge.

29677. They would have a cessation of all claims?—Certainly.

29678. *Lord Purvis*.—A percentage of the value, not of the rate?—We believe that the existing rates are sufficiently high to enable us to fill the value of any beast killed or injured in transit.

29679. *Mr. Scobie*.—Now if the railway companies find that if they lower their rates they cannot pay their dividends, and the value of their capital would go down and these shareholders would suffer?—Well, if they do not lower their rates they will pay smaller dividends, because it will be impossible for us to work our trade.

29680. Well, to prevent a further decline of traffic, and to enable Ireland to stand up against foreign competition and to hold her own, do you think it necessary that these lines should be united into one system and taken over as public property?—Certainly.

29681. And worked by an authority, responsible to the people, using the profits of the lines to reduce the rates?—Certainly; that is the idea.

Oct. 18, 1907.

Mr. M. J. Nagle,
Representative
of the
South of
Ireland Cattle
Traders'
Association.
(See Appendix
No. 15).

Allegation that
small cattle
traders get no
redress for
losses from the
Great Southern
and Western
Railway Com-
pany.

High transit
charges and
foreign com-
petition as
the heaviest
burden have
seriously
crippled the
Irish cattle
trade.

The existing
cattle rates
sufficiently
high to com-
pensate the
Railway Com-
panies for
steeping all
risks in
transit.

The working
of the rail-
ways by a
public author-
ity and the
application of
surplus profits
to rate re-
duction re-
commended.

On 14.1907.

Mr. M. J. Nagle,
Representative
of the
South of
Ireland Cattle
Traders'
Association.

The difficulty
is getting
redress for
any loss
incurred in
transit of
cattle a
serious
grievance

Help help at
cattle loading
books and
man agent
trains registered.

Demand for
insurance of
cattle in trans-
it by the
railway com-
panies and a
reduction in
half wagon
rates

The present
rates for
cattle sufficient
to cover insur-
ance as well
as cost of
transport.
The absence
of through
cattle-traded
cattle rates
via Cork has
seriously im-
paired the
live stock
trade of
that City

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

29592. You said you were disheartened by repeated failures to get redress?—Yes.

29593. I thought that you told us that since your association had been established it had done a great deal?—It does, as far as it applies to the transit of the stock itself, the earlier arrival and speedier transit from fairs to the port of distribution.

29594. Then your association has got redress in a very important matter?—Yes; but even now we have many complaints of delays in transit.

29595. Why should you be disheartened—you ought to be encouraged to go on further?—I meant that remark to apply to any claims we had against the railway company for any loss incurred on route.

29596. How long is it since you had a loss yourself?—Well, about four years.

29597. You have not had any losses for four years—you have not had occasion to make a claim?—Well, I could not say that.

29598. Now, I understand you want the railway company to employ more men to load trains?—Yes.

29599. You never saw cattle loaded that there were not some of the company's servants superintending?—I did.

29600. Did you ever see wagons being loaded without experienced servants of the railway company being there at all?—Certainly; oftentimes.

29601. I am surprised to hear that. At any rate you want more men?—Yes.

29602. And you want the company to run more specials than they do?—Yes.

29603. And that is more expensive to the companies?—Of course it is.

29604. And you want the company to cover your losses by practically giving you an assurance, and that without questioning whose fault or anything, if there were damage the company should pay?—Yes, but only where the fault lies with the railway company. We believe it would do much to restore friendly feeling between the company and the cattle traders if there was an assurance.

29605. It would do much to satisfy the cattle trader, but would not he also pay the company less than now, because you want them now to lower the rate for half wagons?—I do not think I said to lower the rate.

29606. You want a half wagon at half the whole wagon rate?—Yes.

29607. So that you would pay less on a half wagon consignment?—Yes.

29608. Now, supposing the State took over the railways, the State will have to spend more money on those railways?—I think so.

29609. And it would employ more men and run more special trains, wouldn't it?—Yes, but it would be increasing the trade.

29610. But it would cost them more money?—I do not believe it would, under our management.

29611. But if they employ an extra amount of help for the cattle it would cost more than if they do not?—Yes.

29612. Then it will cost them more money?—The cost will be infinitesimal.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson P.O.

29703. Only one question. I do not know whether you know Mr. O'Connor who represents the Meath Cattle Traders' Association?—Is it Mr. George O'Connor.

29704. Yes?—I do.

29705. He gave evidence before us that he would be very glad to see a rate compulsory on the trader as well as on the railway company, under which they would come to an arrangement for insuring the animals?—And what was the compulsory rate?

29706. A small additional contribution to cover the rate, so that the trader would not feel it. He calculated that $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. would cover it. He said, at any rate, that he thought the cattle traders would be willing to pay a small premium in addition to the conveyance rate that would cover them for all losses incurred in transit?—Well, we believe that the present rate should cover insurance.

29707. He did not complain of the rate to any very great extent, and I do not think we have had any evidence as to the rates for cattle being unduly high?—In Cork we are peculiarly neglected with regard to rates, because we have no through rates and the port of Cork. I have no hesitation in saying

that the want of through rates has taken away from our city at least 20 per cent. of the live stock trade, because our members find that we can ship our cattle much cheaper, and as a rule they are loaded in a more expeditious manner in the various ports of England than if we send them via Cork. We can send a wagon of cattle from Mallow to Carlisle for 25 10s. via Dublin; total via Cork, 28 14s. 1d.

29708. Land Prices?—That is double?—Difference in favour of Dublin, 28 15s. 1d. per wagon.

29709. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—You say that the present rate should cover insurance and everything else?—What I would like to impress strongly on the Commission is that we are so handicapped at Cork by the want of a through rate while other ports get preferential treatment that it is a great hardship. We have no through rate for our port. I understand that other companies are quite willing to have a through rate struck, but the Great Southern demands the full local rates.

29710. On the through rate?—The full levels as the through rate which almost all the companies are willing to give.

29711. Mr. Sefton.—Do they take lower rates than through rates by the other ports?—That we do not know. They always keep that to themselves.

29712. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—The English companies get a very small proportion?—A great many men who are largely interested in the trade of our city are contemplating a change of residence altogether, because they say it is far better to live in Dublin or Waterford than it is in Cork owing to this want of a through rate.

29713. When you speak of sending cattle from Mallow to Liverpool, how do you send them?—By Dublin.

29714. Or by Waterford or Rosslare?—We do not send them by Rosslare or Waterford.

29715. By Waterford?—Yes.

29716. And by Dublin, also?—Yes.

29717. And I understand that the English railway companies, or those connected with Dublin, and the Great Southern and Western, give Dublin preferential treatment over Cork?—Certainly, and it is one of the few points on which the preponderating influence exercised by the English railway companies on the Great Southern and Western is apparent. Because we have an idea in the cattle trade, rightly or wrongly, that it is owing to the action of the Great Western of England that they won't allow a through rate to be struck via Cork, because in the case of any live stock conveyed from Mallow by other routes than Cork, via Waterford, the Great Western Company have a large share, if not three-fourths at least, of the trade, because their boats convey them, and of course they have their trains on the other side, whereas if we bring them to Cork our local companies share in the freight. It is a matter which is quite harassing and disturbing our trade in the South, as we have no chance of extending our trade under these conditions, and it is very unfair competition.

29718. Chairman.—Has there never been any through rate?—No, sir, and we have to encounter competition from all parts of Ireland. And in the sheep trade, that I am particularly acquainted with, these men can land their sheep in any part of England eightpence a piece less than I can by Cork.

29719. Why don't you do the same?—Well, we have land for accommodation purposes. The land is practically valueless to us except to keep our sheep overnight or for two or three nights before shipping; and if we send them to Dublin or elsewhere, of course we lose what we derive from putting them on the land at night. And another point, and it is a sound and a great point, is this, that a lot of the English trade now is done direct between the cattle trader and the meat consumer in England through the railway companies, and if I were sending out cattle or sheep to the London market, buying on commission, it is not very much to suppose that it is likely these men I was sending to would say, "We should we not get the local man to buy, as he is in a position to send them cheaper than these men, who have to come from Cork to Waterford to buy them?" And it is extraordinary that we should be compelled to send our trade by another port rather than the legitimate one. And why the Great Southern won't consent is because it would be a longer voyage from Cork to ports in Eng-

land, and the rate would necessarily be low, and therefore the Great Southern would have to take less than if we went by Waterford or Dublin.

29729. Colonel Hysteron Pro. — In other words, if your contention is correct, the protection clauses which were inserted in the Amalgamation Act, under which Cork and Waterford were given protection with regard to other ports, are not of very great value? — They are of no value whatsoever as regards Cork.

29731. Then, with regard to the question about lands, do you think it would be any advantage if the tracks were divided into separate compartments in one of which eight or nine lambs could be separated off, and then the rest of the truck used for another consignment? — Oh, yes, but it would involve expense.

29732. It would not involve a very great cost, but that is the idea I suggested? — I think the trade would severely warrant it.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

29733. I understand you to say that your net getting through rates is the reason why you only send out 32,000 cattle in the year from Cork against 115,500 from Belfast and 135,000 from Dublin. Is that the reason? — That is the sole reason, the want of through rates.

29734. And therefore if you had a through rate, do you consider, as living in Cork, that your proposition would be similar to what it is in Belfast or Dublin? — Certainly. There is no reason why it should not be.

29735. Then, following up that, you would not send 34,000 calves, whereas Belfast only sends 735. Have you any special advantages as regards the trade in calves? — Of course we have. We raise one-eighth to one-tenth of the entire cattle of Ireland in the County Cork, and therefore we have a greater supply to draw on for calves and young cattle than any other cattle dealers in Ireland have.

29736. Do you say that you export more from Cork than is exported from any other port? — We export more calves than any other county.

29737. How is it that with your limited cattle export trade in Cork you are enabled to ship cattle to the number of 34,000 against Dublin shipping only 11,000, and Belfast 735? — Ship them to England?

29738. Yes? — That is the reason I have given you, that we raise so much cattle.

29739. How do you manage that without through rates? — Well, of course, I may tell you that at least fifty per cent. of these calves are brought over the Brandon line to Cork, and we have, therefore, a special feeder for Cork that any other county cannot very well avail of. Forty per cent. of these calves are shipped via Cork.

29739. And if you had really satisfactory through rates would that also increase the exportation of calves? — I have no doubt that it would, because it would give facilities for more buyers from the entire and midlands to come down to Cork if we had through rates everywhere.

29739a. I will only ask you one question, because I think you probably over-estimated in an answer you gave a little while ago on another point. If you got all you have asked for from the railway companies you said you could increase the cattle for exportation from nine millions in value up to a hundred millions. Surely that is a little bit in excess. Could you double your traffic if you had really all you want? — Well, I have no doubt we could.

29731. That is about the proportion you would like to put in your evidence? — Yes, I think so.

29731a. Mr. Sexton. — His meaning is the cattle supply is inexhaustible, within the probable limits of the trade.

29732. Lord Pierce. — I think he would be justified in stating that the traffic would be doubled.

29733. Mr. Sexton. — Double the value of the export? — (Witness). — Double the value of the export.

29734. Lord Pierce. — Another point. Did I understand you to say that in England the wagons were divided in two? — Yes.

29735. And therefore one man could have sheep or cattle at one side and another at the other end. Is that so? — It is.

29736. And it is done in Ireland only in a very exceptional case? — They will not do it at all for us.

29737. But it is done in England? — Oh, yes.

29738. Have you ever brought that before the Railway Commissioners? — I do not think they have.

29739. Have you ever brought it before the Agricultural Department? — No; I do not think so.

29740. In fact this is the first time you have brought it forward? — Yes. The only other thing that I have to say is that we believe that if the Irish railways were nationalised under proper control there would be great economy in the working of the combined lines.

29741. You are strongly in favour of that? — I am instructed by my Society to say that.

29742. That you would like to see the railways nationalised? — Yes.

29743. Under some Irish management? — Under some Irish management.

29744. Chairman. — But you have told Mr. Sexton that? — I quite forgot it.

29745. Mr. Fether. — Will you kindly ask Mr. Nagle to give the date at which the Great Southern Company refused to give a special for eleven wagons for Tipperary? — Witness. — Certainly; I can get it for you in two or three days.

29746. Chairman. — Send it to the Secretary brief? — Yes; I can get the date.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. M. J. Nagle, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association.

The possibility of doubling the export cattle trade from Ireland under more liberal conditions of transport.

English cattle wagons are divided.

Nationalisation of the railways under the control of an Irish public authority advocated.

(See Appendix No. 16).

Mr. P. FITZGERALD EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

29747. You also appear on behalf of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association? — Yes.

29748. Now, you have some new matters to bring before us? — Only about the wagon rate.

29749. We had that before? — I don't think you had. I don't think the figures were given to you.

29750. Well, give us the figures? — As to the position of Cork, it has not got the benefit of this through rate.

29751. But we had that already. That was referred to by the previous witness—the injury to the district as consequence of there being no through rates in operation for Cork? — I want to give you the rates between the Limerick Junction and Mallow and the wagon rates.

29752. Well, give them to us? — On the 10th of last November we had a fair at Kilmallock. There were two members of the Cattle Trade Association there, one of them sent forty-two calves via Dublin to Chester; and the other could get us wagon to go the same day. The company was short of wagons, and they had to be sent from Cork. One man sent two wagons via Dublin to Chester at 25 7s. per wagon, or 310 14s. for the two, and the other man sent his two wagons to Cork for the best, the charge being 21 4s. 8d. from Kilmallock to Cork, that is 25 7s. 4d. for the two wagons to Cork, and fifteen guineas he

had to pay from Cork to Chester. So there was a difference in favour of Dublin of 27 10s. 4d.

29753. That was a large amount in excess of what was paid for the same quantity of stock going at the through rate? — Yes, that is one of the instances to show how the port of Cork is handicapped.

29754. And of course in addition to the saving effected the time by Dublin was shorter? — The cattle that came by Dublin were in Chester at ten o'clock on the following day. The cattle that went by Cork did not arrive till the day after, and lost the market.

29755. Have you any instances from Mallow to Carlisle? — Yes. I sent 200 calves to Dromedaries and I sent about twenty or twenty-two in each wagon. I sent a wagon of calves by Dublin for 25 10s., and if you sent by Cork the cost would be 14s. from Mallow to Cork, and 8s. apiece from Cork to Carlisle.

29756. And what would be the total cost in that case? — 23 14s. and 25 10s. by Dublin.

29757. And from Thurles to Carlisle? — It is the same rate. And the company have made a cheaper rate by fact than from Ballybophy. They charge more from Ballybophy than from Mallow.

29758. The same distance? — Oh, Mallow, I suppose, is very nearly sixty or eighty miles further than Ballybophy. They would charge as much from Maryborough as they would from Mallow into Carlisle. There is

Mr. P. Fitzgerald, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association.

Comparison of the charges on calves from Mallow to Carlisle via Dublin with the freight via Cork.

Cross charged cattle raised from Ballybophy via Dublin higher than from Mallow.

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. F. Fitzgerald,
Representative
of the
South of
Ireland Cattle
Traders'
Association.

The general
adoption of
falling doors
for cattle
wagons
suggested.

An improved
daily service
for cattle
between Cork
and Dublin
suggested.

Mr. M. J.
Nagle,
Representative
of the
South of
Ireland Cattle
Traders'
Association.

The move-
ment and
time created
by the absence
of through
cattle men
on Cork.

The interest
of the English
railway com-
panies having
stations in
Dublin and
Waterford
opposed to
through cattle
men.

no difference, and from the places from Maryborough down they raise their rates.

29758. It costs more by Cork from Mitchelstown to Cambridge in consequence of the want of a through rail?—Yes.

29759. With reference to the doors of cattle wagons what do you suggest?—I suggest that doors with hinges would be the safest.

29760. Falling doors?—Falling doors.

29761. Are there any wagons fitted with them?—There are a good few.

29762. The modern wagons, I suppose?—Yes, some of them.

29763. And the old ones are not?—No, very few of them.

29764. And with the falling doors you contend, I suppose, that the cattle are more easily loaded?—Yes, and more safely. At a recent fair a man had cattle in a wagon, and the door slipped, and one of the cattle near the door fell, and his back was nearly broken before he was got up. They are in many ways dangerous.

29765. Is there a cattle trade on the Kerry line?—There is.

29766. And is the train service good for the cattle traffic?—No, sir.

29767. Why?—They have made the rate so cheap from Malles that all cattle are going by Dublin. Very few cattle go to Cork. They have made their wagon rate cheap, and the company want to carry it by Dublin. They favour the rates everywhere by Dublin.

29768. The cattle traffic must be considerable between Cork and Dublin. What time does the Cork train start—the goods train by which cattle is carried?—About eight o'clock at night, I think.

29769. Are you sure it is not for?—There are two—

one leaves at ten, I think, and the other about eight.

29770. What time are they due in Dublin?—About six in the morning, I think, and in some cases later.

29771. Six o'clock is in time for the Dublin market?—No, it is not. You could not show cattle coming off a train at that hour. They would not show very well after being crunched up in wagons.

29772. Your suggestion is that a live stock train should run to Malles, and then be attached to the Tealoe goods train, and that would be an improvement in the present mode of working?—Yes.

29773. To get the cattle earlier into Dublin, so as to be in time for the Dublin market?—Yes.

29774. And that would be to the advantage of the sender and the owners of cattle?—Yes.

29775. Mr. Scroes—Do you think that the Board of Trade or the Department of Agriculture, or even the Railway Commission, have made any practical impression upon the working of the railway system?—I don't think so, from the point of view of Cork, none that I know of.

29776. Would you say that they are useless, so far as you know?—Well, in the South I don't see that there is any good done in the trade, any way for the sending of cattle.

29777. You heard Mr. Nagle give his evidence?—Yes.

29778. Do you agree with him, that the interest of the country imperatively requires that the Irish rail ways shall be worked as a united system, by an Irish authority, responsible to the people of Ireland?—I do, sir.

29779. Is that the judgment of your association?—Yes; and of all the members.

29780. Now, I want to ask some questions of Mr. Nagle, as to the want of a through rate, if he has no objection to answer them.

Mr. M. J. NAGLE, re-examined by Mr. Searles.

29781. Do you submit that, according to the accepted principles of transport, the route from Cork being more of a sea route than the other, the rate paid should be lower?—Certainly.

29782. The figures quoted by Mr. Fitzgerald show that in the case mentioned the rate from Cork exceeds the rates from the other ports in a proportion varying from one-eighth of the whole rate to nearly double?—Yes, that is so.

29783. And if the trade is hand-driven by Continental and foreign competition, that surely would be an intolerable burden?—Of course it would.

29784. I mean the difference between paying £10 14s and £18 4s 4d for two wagons of cattle to Chester might amount to the difference between profit and loss in the market?—Of course, it does, and probably more. We do not get so much profit as that by two wagons of cattle.

29785. So the man who sends the cattle in this way from Cork is likely to incur a loss?—Of course. Therefore, in most cases, our members cannot avail of the natural port, which is Cork, or get them shipped under their own supervision, which means a good deal—storage and all that. In many ways they would want the business to be transacted under their own supervision. If the cattle are going by Dublin, it means that probably they must give their cattle over to the care of the company, so perhaps there may be an important fair next day that they have to attend.

29786. They have to let the cattle pass into other hands and send them by devious and inconvenient routes?—That is so.

29787. Now does the transit through Cork cost the total of all the local rates?—I should say it does—the total.

29788. The benefit of through booking is wholly lost?—You have to pay from Kilmallick to Chester via Cork what would be the total of the local rates between the two places?—Yes.

29789. Now, I wish, if possible, to understand the cause of this. Could the cause be this—that the English railway companies who own the English lines to the points of destination run boats themselves from Waterford and Dublin?—Certainly that is one of the great contributory causes, if not the greatest.

29790. So that, in the cases of Waterford and

Dublin, the railway companies get also the advantage of carrying also by sea?—Yes.

29791. And the railway company can settle the matter without allowing any steamship company to interfere?—And they do.

29792. And that secures through rates from Waterford and Dublin?—Yes, and it leaves our company, the only independent company—the Cork Steampacket Company—out in the cold.

29793. And the existence of these railway companies' lines of steamers from Waterford and Dublin probably makes the other steamship companies trading from those ports more easily to deal with by the railway company?—Waterford is the only port in which sea competition does exist between the Waterford Steamship Company and the Great Western.

29794. The existence of the lines of steamers owned by railway companies running from Waterford and from Dublin would make it very difficult for other steamship companies trading at these ports to refuse an arrangement?—Of course it would. They would lose their traffic.

29795. And that is the state of affairs that secures the through traffic for Waterford and Dublin?—Yes.

29796. And in Cork is there any competition with the Cork Steampacket Company?—No. But our company are quite willing to have through rates established in connection with the Great Southern and Western Railway and the other companies.

29797. What do you mean by "our Company"?—The City of Cork Steampacket Co., because they see their legitimate traffic diverted from them on account of the through booking. We can send the cattle cheaper by Waterford and Dublin, and that leads to a falling off in their receipts.

29798. And what is the reason that the Great Southern and Western Railway and the Steampacket Company cannot agree on a through rate?—At a meeting in Cork two or three years ago, at the Harbour Board at which Mr. Neale was present, he was challenged with the fact that the Steampacket Company were willing to accept through booking from them provided that the Great Southern did not require the whole of their local rates to be included in it.

29799. Who said that?—The Cork Steampacket Company.

29800. And is your understanding in the matter this, that on the one hand the Great Southern Company want the whole of their local rate out of the through rate, and that on the other hand the Cork Steampacket Company claim the whole of their local rate out of any through rate?—I do not believe they would. I believe that, if a through rate were struck in the morning, it would be much less than the combined one now, otherwise it would be of no advantage to us.

29801. You mean that the Cork Steampacket Company, though unwilling to give the Great Southern the whole of their local rate, would be willing to make terms?—Yes.

29802. But they are not willing to give the Great Southern the whole of their local rate?—No. The fact of the matter is that, pending these two companies coming to a working arrangement, we in Cork the cattle trade are completely handicapped, and our business going steadily from us, because we cannot stand this extra charge on cattle and pigs.

29803. At present there is no authority, local or other, to bring them to an agreement?—I think not.

29804. If there was a united system of railways in Ireland, do you expect that they would be quite impartial as between the different ports?—I have no doubt that they would.

Mr. P. FITZGERALD examined by Mr. ACONORTH.

29805. Supposing that you had a new authority, and that it was really impartial between Cork and Dublin, I suppose that would satisfy you?—It is about the difference in the rates that I complain.

29806. But, if there was such an authority, would it not be impartial between Dublin and Cork?—I am sure it would.

29807. Do you think that if it was, Cork would think that it was quite impartial—would not Cork want a little more than its fair share, and would not Dublin also want a little more?—But Dublin is getting it all and Cork nothing.

29808. But Dublin has been complaining that it has not been getting enough, and going to law to get what it thinks enough. That is all I have to ask.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON POE.

29809. The cattle traffic from Cork is a considerable one?—Yes, the county is a great rearing county.

29810. It is half that of the whole of the rest of Ireland?—It is.

29811. And naturally under such circumstances, where you have to send them at such a high prohibitive rate, it must affect the trade very considerably?—Oh, yes.

29812. Do you ship them to Liverpool or Bristol?—We ship them to Liverpool and Bristol for Cambridge and all these other markets.

29813. And, as to these figures you give us of the rates by Cork, that, of course, includes the shipping rate from Cork to Liverpool and Cork to Malloy?—It does.

29814. Do you also send by Dublin?—We send a good deal by Dublin.

29815. The sea passage from Cork to Liverpool is considerably longer than the sea passage from Dublin to Liverpool, and you would expect to get it at a cheaper rate?

Mr. Nagle (previous witness).—Yes, because we know by experience that carriage by sea is cheaper than by rail.

29816. Colonel HUTCHESON POE.—It would not be correct to say that the sea passage in itself would be an impediment?—Mr. Nagle.—That should be a reason why we should get it at a cheaper rate.

29817. Colonel HUTCHESON POE.—And the cattle traders are content to send them the longer distance by sea and the shorter by rail?

Mr. Nagle (previous witness).—Yes.

29818. Colonel HUTCHESON POE (to Mr. Fitzgerald).—Though you have found that the Board of Trade and the Department of Agriculture, and the Railway Commission have not given much satisfaction as regards the complaints that you may have to make, I would like to ask you whether, as regards trading facilities, shipping accommodation, and things of that sort, there has been any improvement?—There has been an improvement.

29819. And would direct to each port its natural traffic?—Certainly.

29820. Do you understand that a principal reason for the creation of such an authority would be to fix such Irish export rates as would give this trade especially a better approach to equality of conditions in the competition with the foreign meat trade with England?—So I understand; and it is a matter of supreme importance.

29821. And that would mean a reduction of export rates?—Certainly; what we require very badly.

29822. An united railway authority would not insist on the full local rates to Cork in connection with the despatch of cattle from that port?—Oh, certainly not.

29823. And they could, therefore, you think, easily settle with the Cork Steampacket Company or any other?—Certainly; they are very eager to do so, to my own personal knowledge.

29824. And if they found any difficulty they could have authority to run a line of channels until they place the matter on a proper footing?—Certainly. They could accept any fair arrangement.

29825. Do you agree with Mr. Fitzgerald as to these details he has given at?—I do.

29826. And, in addition to what you have said as to the working of an united system, you think that these establish an additional argument for it?—Yes.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

29827. In consequence of the action of these different bodies?—Yes, a slight improvement.

29828. With regard to the provision of falling docks and other improvements, the evidence of the officers of the Department has been to the effect that very great improvements have been carried out by the railway companies and the shipping companies in providing better accommodation generally. Has that been your experience?—There has been a little improvement since our society was started in Cork. The railways have done a lot since then.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

29829. When do you blame for your not being able to get a through rate?—I blame the railway company.

29830. Is it the Irish railway company, the steamship company, or the English railway companies, as was suggested by Mr. Nagle, to get the longest traffic? Have you made up your mind was it to blame?—The Great Southern.

29831. That is the same as Mr. Nagle?—Yes.

29832. You and Mr. Nagle agree on that point?—Yes. They will give us no help to get through rates.

29833. Then, do you agree with Mr. Nagle that the length of voyage from Cork to Liverpool, or Glasgow, or London, rather than going by Dublin or Rosslare, does not injure the cattle, and that, if you have the same through rate from Cork by steamer direct to those ports, you believe that the cattle would be landed in as good condition?—Yes.

29834. And, then, you do not agree with the gentleman who said that the long sea voyage prohibited the cattle traffic from Cork, largely?—Not at all.

29835. Mr. TAYLOR.—I want to ask one question. I would like to ask him if he ever made a request to the Great Southern to run a train from Cork to Malloy to connect with the 6.25 a.m. from Malloy to Dublin, to enable the stock to come to Dublin at an earlier hour. (To witness).—Have you ever applied to the Great Southern for such a train?—No, because I do not send any cattle to the Dublin market.

29836. But the complaint was that you did not get to Dublin early enough to be in time for the market. There is a train leaving Malloy at 6.25, which is due in Dublin at 4.50. Have you ever asked the Great Southern to give a connection with that?—No.

29837. Or, if you had such a train, do you expect that there would be any cattle sent to the Dublin market from Cork?—They do sometimes.

29838. Would there be a supply to warrant the running of special trains from Cork to Malloy?—I could not say that. Sometimes there might be plenty and other times not.

Mr. Nagle (G.S.W.R.).—There is a good explanation which I can give, but perhaps I had better leave it over for the evidence we shall give later on.

Mr. Nagle (previous witness).—We did ask for this

Oct. 16, 1907.

Mr. M. J. Nagle, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association.

Unlawful working of the railways by an Irish authority would enforce equitable treatment of the ports, and avoid competition with the foreign meat trade with England. The Cork government is the master of through rates an additional argument for police control of the railways.

Mr. P. Fitzgerald, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association.

An improvement in transit facilities elsewhere.

The Great Southern and Western Railway Company to blame for the absence of through cattle rates via Cork.

The long sea voyage from Cork to English ports not any drawback to the cattle traffic being sent by that route.

The question of sending special cattle trains to Malloy to connect with an early goods train for Dublin.

Oct. 18, 1902.

Mr. P. Fitzgerald, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Traders' Association.

connection from Cork to Mallow, and we were refused it by the Great Southern.
28837a. Chairman.—Because there was not sufficient traffic.

Mr. JOHN HORAN, C.B., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. John Horan, C.B., County Surveyor, Limerick.

The importance of Limerick as a distributing centre.

28838. Mr. Horan, you are County Surveyor of the County Limerick?—I am.

28839. Of course Limerick is an important centre for the distribution of traffic?—Yes.

28840. It may be described as inland?—Yes, it is sixty miles inland from the coast.

28841. It is also a port?—Yes.

28842. And vessels of a moderate size get up to Limerick?—They frequently come in with 3,000 tons of wheat on board. They enter the Shannon with a cargo of 5,000 tons, but they lighten the cargo at a place called Beagh, and then the vessel comes up to Limerick dock, with about 3,000 tons on board.

28843. I suppose the vessel is aground at low water?—No, it is beached in a floating dock of about seven acres in extent.

The tonnage of vessels which enter Limerick docks.

28844. They cannot get up the Shannon at any state of the tide?—The very big ones come up at high water springs.

28845. What is the difference between the rise of the tides?—Three or four feet.

28846. But still it is a fact that vessels of 3,000 tons and more are sometimes in the Limerick Dock?—Almost invariably every vessel that comes in is a large one, and 3,000 tons is the maximum.

28847. What is the chief import?—Wheat.

The imports and exports, and the tonnage for 1902.

28848. Do you get coal?—A good deal of coal. There are two steamers direct weekly—one from Glasgow and one from Liverpool.

28849. Go on?—In 1905 the imports were 175,000 tons.

28850. Tons of goods or of ships?—Tons of goods. The exports are of native timber. The steamers take away some of the condensed milk, butter, and articles of that kind.

28851. How many railways serve Limerick?—Five railways. I may say these centre in one station in Limerick—five independent lines.

28852. Independent lines?—They are different branches.

28853. Name the companies serving Limerick?—The Ennis branch is one, the Nenagh branch, and the Waterford branch, the Cork direct and the Kerry line—I should have said five separate lines, not five independent lines.

The railway companies serving Limerick.

28854. What is the Railway Company serving Limerick?—The Great Southern and Western.

28855. And the Limerick and Ennis and the Limerick and Foyens—three used to be a company running to Foyens?—Yes.

28856. They have all been absorbed by one large company, and therefore you have only one railway?—Yes. The only other company having running powers into Limerick is the Midland Great Western, but I think they only exercise that running power for goods. I never see any passenger trains there from the Midland system.

The distance of the docks from the railway, and the want of rail connection.

28857. They use the line and station for goods traffic?—Yes. They come down from Athlone.

28858. Is there railway communication to the docks?—There is not.

28859. How far are they distant from the railway?—As the crow flies only a mile, about two miles through the streets.

28860. Limerick is a corporate city?—Yes.

28861. And there are a Mayor and Corporation?—Yes.

28862. Have the Corporation of Limerick at any time made any representation to the Railway Company about communication with the docks?—That I am not aware of, but to my own knowledge the question was taken up by the Harbour Board some years ago.

28863. The docks are managed by the Harbour Board?—Yes.

The financial position of the Harbour Board, their losses from constructing a railway connection.

28864. They have taken it up?—They were about, as I understand, some fifteen or sixteen years ago, to endeavour to contribute largely to the construction of this branch. Meanwhile one of their dock walls fell in, and they had to borrow a large sum of money for reconstruction. This they are still engaged in repaying. After that they had to improve

Mr. Nagle (previous witness).—But in dealing with large customers of theirs we would not consider it much of a compliment if even they did open the train at a loss.

the channel outside, and have to spend £2,000 a year in keeping the channel open and dredged. I do not see how the Harbour Board, however willing they might be, could do very much in contributing to a railway line to the docks.

28865. What is their income?—Their income is about £12,000 a year.

28866. That is their gross income?—That is their gross.

28867. What is their net income?—I think there is very little left.

28868. In other words, the financial position of the Harbour Board is such that they cannot themselves construct this railway to connect with the existing railways?—Indeed I do not think they could.

28869. What does it cost to get the traffic carted?—I suppose a good deal of the traffic has to be carted to and from the railway station?—A great deal of traffic. It ordinarily costs 3s. a ton.

28870. A mile?—Well, I may be outside the cost, but I know on a case I myself had, some goods used to get up, it cost 18s. a ton.

28871. That is a special thing, requiring special vehicles, but ordinary traffic—grain, for instance, carted to the trains—the grain arriving in those ships is not for consumption in Limerick?—It is nearly all milled in Limerick.

28872. A good deal of it is distributed, and, of course, has to be carted to the railway station?—Yes.

28873. At what do you reckon the cost of that?—I think it must approach something like 3s.

28874. What are the physical difficulties, if there are any?—It is up-hill all the way.

28875. Are the hills steep?—Not very.

Mr. Yelland.—The rates are from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a ton for carting in Limerick. I think you may take 1s. to 1s. 6d. as the general rate.

28876. Chairman.—Grain landed in Limerick in large quantities should be carted to the station, if it is only a mile, for 1s. (Witness).—I am not quite up in the commercial figures.

28877. All you know is that for some particular article requiring special vehicles and special treatment you had to pay 18s. a ton?—Yes.

28878. Lord Pirbright.—The railway company do not undertake the carting?—No.

28879. Colonel Hutchinson Poy.—Mr Shaw gave evidence before us that it costs about 2s. a ton to cart. That was his evidence.

28880. Lord Pirbright.—I took it that it was the railway company who do the carting.

Mr. Yelland.—Mr Shaw was speaking of bacon and not of grain.

28881. Colonel Hutchinson Poy.—Of coal.

Mr. Yelland.—It is not my experience that that is the case in country towns in Ireland.

28882a. Chairman.—We will put it down at 1s. 6d. (To Witness).—Are there any physical difficulties in connection with making railway communication with the docks?—I think not, as an engineer. A line might be run round by Ballinscurra, low-lying ground, but this would make the line a little longer.

28883. Would there be large profits?—Well, no.

28884. Would it be an expensive undertaking?—It would not. A great deal of the land is low lying and somewhat liable to flooding.

28885. We have heard a good deal of evidence with reference to creameries in your district?—That is a very big industry.

28886. That is of comparatively recent creation?—Yes, it has been growing up steadily for fifteen or sixteen years.

28887. Day within the last twenty years?—Yes.

28888. And it is growing and increasing?—Yes.

28889. There is a place called Newcastle West and Ballynascree?—Yes. A proposal was made some time ago to run a line from Newcastle West to Ballynascree to take in a large district of country where these creameries are very thick. I have a map here that would give you some idea what a lot of them are to be dealt with.

29987. Are they marked in it?—Yes. There is a scale of one inch to the mile. Every blue dot was a crossway, and some of them are in couples.

29988. Where in Newcastle West?—Witness pointed it out, and added—The two counties agreed to guarantee 4 per cent for a railway there about twenty years ago, but the Privy Council threw out the scheme.

29989. Has that scheme been revived?—Nothing further has been done since.

29990. Is that particular district fairly populous?—It is. They are an industrious hard-working lot of people. I do not know any people more deserving of a lift if they could get it.

29991. That particular railway would be an immense advantage to that district and would serve most of these crossways about which you have spoken?—Yes. I would put first in importance the little loop line to Limerick Dock, because it is not a matter affecting the city of Limerick alone, and Mander and Connought should get any little saving they can.

29992. If the carting were 1s. 6d. a ton, and a railway were made, it could be done for less than 6d.—Under 6d., sir.

29993. So that there would be a saving of 1s. a ton—that is your idea?—Yes.

29994. You are the County Surveyor?—Yes.

29995. And you are pretty conversant with the county?—Yes.

29996. Is there any other part of the county where, in your judgment, or the judgment of your Council, it would be an advantage to the agricultural interest if a light railway were made?—Yes. The next one I would mention would be out to a little town called Bruff, the centre of a large farming district, only twelve miles from Limerick.

29997. That has never been authorised?—No. It was before the Grand Jury at Limerick at one time, and was thrown out on the opposition of the Great Southern and Western Railway. Their station at that time, Rostemple, served Bruff.

29998. May you mention one?—There could be another useful little branch from Kilmallock to Kilsfran.

29999. What is that?—A thriving little town of about 2,000 inhabitants on the side of the hills there. There is a big traffic gone from Kilmallock to Kilsfran of coal and timber, and has to be distributed all round the district there.

30000. It would serve the district, not the place alone?—Yes.

30001. Is there any other suggestion of your Council?—There was another very important one that was mooted some time ago, and that was for the reclamation of about 20,000 acres of mountain bog here (indicates on map). It was suggested to make a line from Harrington, close to Foyass. There are limestone crags extending over many miles, and the idea was to convert this into lime and reclaim the land. There was also a proposal to connect with Limerick.

30002. Lord Parry?—Do you propose to make a line over the bog?—It goes through the valley. They are mountain bogs, capable of reclamation and of giving wonderful crops of hay and other crops. This was brought up by the Rev. Robert Ambrose, F.R.

30003. Chairman?—What is the distance from Bruff to Limerick?—Fourteen miles direct.

30004. Do I understand you to say that coal and other things used in this district are carted from Limerick?—Not all of it. Some of it is brought up to Kilmallock from Cork, but some goes out from Limerick.

30005. You do not appear today to make any complaints against the railway company?—I have comparatively little to say about complaints. We do not complain down in Limerick. We are a busy lot of people and try to help ourselves.

30006a. You have no special grievance against the railway company?—No, sir. I should also mention a suggested line from Ballinacorney to Limerick Dock. At the time the proposed amalgamation was on the orders of the line from Ballinacorney to Tralee objected very much to the amalgamation, and they proposed to make a line in here (indicates), and part of their proposal was to run up the canal with the docks at Limerick. Railway communication is badly needed between Kildimo and Pallaskey and Limerick. There are about the only branches that have been discussed within my recollection. There

may be other things with which I am not so much concerned. One from Abbeyfeale to Newmarket would be of great advantage, but I am not so much concerned with it. Might I mention other matters not connected with railways, one is the navigation of the Shannon.

30006. Chairman?—That is outside the scope of our inquiry.

Witness?—There is a large district wanting a bridge over the Shannon at Castleconnell.

30006a. Chairman?—That is beyond our inquiry.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

30007. Has the Limerick County Council expressed any opinion upon the general railway question?—Well, so. It was understood two of their own members were to come and give evidence before you, but I think there was some failure about them, and I was asked to come and give their views generally. There were one or two small matters that they asked me to make a complaint about.

30008. Did you discuss your evidence with them?—No.

30009. Were the Limerick County Council represented at the meeting of the County Council's General Council, where a resolution was passed on the general question of Irish railways?—I understand they always sit.

30010. And they are in sympathy with the General Council on that question?—I expect they are.

30011. You feel it to be unfortunate, as indeed we all do, that the exports of that noble harbour of Limerick do not amount to very much?—That is so.

30012. If the export rates were lowered upon the principle of giving the Irish producer equal facilities with the Continental and foreign producer, and so strengthen his hold upon the English market, do you not think the exports of Limerick might be greatly expanded?—I think they might; but Limerick is not so favourably situated for export as the eastern seaports.

30013. But still, in a country so rich in agricultural products, reduced rates would, no doubt, expand the exports?—I expect so.

30014. And, if the inland rates in Ireland were lowered upon the basis of giving the Irish producer equal facility with the importer, you probably would produce more coal and grain in Ireland and have to import less?—I do not know about producing coal. We have some.

30015. At Castleconnell?—Yes.

30016. And the great Connought coal field, not yet fully worked. It appears, then, that a remission of the Irish rates upon the principle of equality with competitors in other countries might have a very cheering and happy effect upon the port of Limerick?—It might.

30017. The Commission has followed with great interest your evidence upon the banks and feeders. You have mentioned six or seven in the County Limerick and the adjoining part of County Cork?—Yes.

30018. Have you any idea how many banks and feeders are present from various parts of Ireland upon strong grounds of local and general utility?—Well, I know there are a great many.

30019. There might be one hundred?—Possibly.

30020. And, of those you have mentioned, some, you say, are much needed, and more are sorely needed?—I should say the connection with Limerick Dock and the Drumcogh line are sorely needed.

30021. Do you think any of these branches are likely to be made out of subscribed capital?—I think not.

30022. Do you expect that the Treasury will make any more lines unless asked by local contributions?—If the Treasury gave a contribution, and the local authority a guarantee the Drumcogh line would be made. If the grant led the way, I have little doubt there would be a local contribution for that one.

30023. But, speaking generally, and looking to the history of guarantees, do you think the era of local contributions is nearly over?—I do.

30024. Then how do you expect to have these branch lines made?—Unless the Government steps in with the idea of developing industry, and makes them, they are not likely to be made.

30025. Government, as an abstract term, in practice, takes many forms. Suppose there were an Irish authority having control of the rail-

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. John Dillon, C.B., County Surveyor, Limerick.

The probable advantage of a new line from Abbeyfeale to Newmarket.

The Limerick County Council in agreement with the General Council of County

Cork on the question of Irish railways.

The probability of Limerick exports being greatly expanded if export rates were lowered.

The number of small additional lines required in Ireland.

The improbability of any further railways being made out of subscribed capital.

The construction of the small additional lines by the Government suggested.

Dec. 16, 1887.

Mr. John
Hosie, Esq.,
County
Barrister,
Limerick.

The transfer
of the Irish
railways to a
central Irish
authority
recommended,
provided
economies
would be
affected.

The transfer
of the owner-
ship and
working of
the railways
to the
British
Government
can be
unavoidable.

Satisfactory
working of
the Irish
railways
under a
public
authority
is essential.

The conditions
governing
railway policy
in the
Colonies are
analogous to
Ireland.

ways as a united system, and having at its disposal a fund created by public credit by the purchase of the lines, and a further fund created by the savings upon a united working, would you not think that a most hopeful way both of providing the same required for lines and branches without imposing local burdens, and also for reducing the rates where that might be necessary?—On the hypothetical case that there would be a saving, yes, sir.

22926. Let us investigate that point for a moment, whether there would be a saving. I say nothing as to a set-off against over-taxation, but, suppose the Treasury lent the money, the charge for the Treasury loan to purchase the Irish railways would be probably a great deal less than the present net profits—I have not gone into that.

22927. Assume that. That would constitute a large saving. In the second place, the working of the railways as a united system would be much more economical than the working of the various lines which are now under independent management?—I do not know; that is to be seen.

22928. Do you not consider the probability lies in that direction?—No. I think State purchase would mean killing the Irish industries that have not wholly perished—I mean the management of our railways, for instance—and I would be sorry to see State purchase. The idea in this country is to develop industries; it is not to open up the country, as in Australia.

22929. Do you mean that you would not like to see the British Government owning and making Irish lines?—I do not see where the advantage would come in. The idea is to develop industries, not to open up the country as in the case of Australia. This country is very well opened up, and all the main lines are built that are ever likely to be made.

22930. Would not all this construction of new lines be opening up the country and developing industry?—They are very small lines compared with the total mileage of railways. For instance, the biggest is only twenty-eight miles.

22931. Anyhow they would cost a great deal of money, and the question is how to provide it. You would not care to see the British Government owning and working the Irish railways?—I would not, because I think it would be killing one of our little industries, and if Irishmen start a railway and make it successful, I would not grudge them their dividends.

22932. I agree with you. I would not like to see the British Government or any external body owning and working the Irish railways for the purpose of stimulating Irish industries; but looking to the example of the world, and of all civilized countries, except two—Great Britain and the United States—the wealth and commercial development of which make them no analogy for Ireland, don't you think that to commit railways to a public authority as, as an expert gentleman from Australia told us to-day, the best guarantee for efficiency and economical working?—I am not satisfied of that.

22933. In the nature of the case take seventeen independent administrations, maintaining separate staffs, and receiving their supplies in small quantities, and having seventeen parties out of which to pay for all their wants, does it not appeal to experience that if all that expenditure were managed by one administration, it would be greatly lightened?—I am not at all certain of it. I think the Government can have sufficient control of the railways, and exercise control as it ought to do, without going into the question of killing industries.

22934. We have had fifty years of public effort to influence or manage railways from outside, and we find the volume of dissatisfaction growing?—Dissatisfaction, at times, is everywhere in the world with the working of the railways.

22935. No. Have you ever heard of a country where State railways were established, and in which they wish to revert or change to private ownership?—My knowledge of the matter is got from reading what goes on in the Colonies and in undeveloped countries. I think it is necessary that the Government should start railways of their own there, rather than give them up to private enterprise, but in old settled countries it is not desirable.

22936. It is not alone in the Colonies and new countries, but in every country except Great Britain and the United States, that the railways, as a rule, are owned and worked by the State. Have you ever

heard that where State railways have been wholly or partly established, it has ever occurred to anybody in those countries to go back to private ownership, or to sell the lines to private capitalists?—I have never heard; but the two greatest States in the world are Great Britain and the United States, and the railways are privately owned.

22937. They are very wealthy, and fully commercially developed countries, and better able to bear the commercial system. But I put against them the example of the world at large, and of all other countries except these two, and if you find in all other countries that once the State system is established, nobody dreams of reverting to private ownership, is not that a proof of satisfaction with the system of publicly owned lines?—If I went into the figures further, I might say it was or it was not, but I cannot answer without looking it up.

22938. About developing industries, the burden of evidence here is that the present export rates from Ireland, taken in conjunction with the system of very low rates into England from the Continent and foreign countries, do greatly hamper and restrict the Irish export trade. That is not developing industries, but the reverse?—The reverse, sir.

22939. On the other hand, the evidence is, from scores of men engaged in trade, that the system of low import rates into Ireland, contrasted with the system of high inland rates within Ireland, does place the Irish manufacturer and the trader who attempts to distribute Irish goods in Ireland at a great disadvantage with those who sell imported goods?—That is where State control should come in.

22940. I know; but those are the main effects of the present railway system. If a system were established under a public authority in Ireland upon the basis that those two effects should be reversed, that the export rate should be placed on a fair footing with the rates from foreign countries into England, and that the inland rates should be so graded as to place them on a fair footing with the import rates, would not that tend to give the most powerful possible stimulus to Irish industries?—It would; but it could be done, if the State exercised the control it already has. I don't think it at all certain.

22941. Do you mean you would see State control to bring legal compulsion to bear on the railways to reduce their rates?—If the complaints were justified, certainly.

22942. Oh, then, you propose a highly contentious settlement?—Certainly.

22943. Don't you think, Mr. Horan, as a man of peace, if we can arrive at a settlement which would be fairly satisfactory to all the interests, that would be by far to be preferred?—I do not know that at all. I am going back to the old point, that I think it would be killing Irish industries that have not failed if you take up the Irish railways under State management.

22944. You admit that the main effect of the present system of rates does restrict Irish agricultural output as compared with foreign into England, and prevents the growth of Irish manufactures as compared with imports?—I have so admitted that; but I say that if there are genuine complaints, it would be the duty of the State to attend to and rectify them.

22945. It is testified a hundred times that the effect of the rates is, as I have said, and as you have admitted, and I am putting it to you, that if a united system under public control would get rid of this evil, and place Irish agriculturists and Irish manufacturers on a fair footing, so greater stimulus to industry could be given than that?—You suggested purchase to cure the evil. I say State control can cure it, and not kill our local railway industries.

22946. Kill them! You agree that the reductions required are large and general?—Not very large.

22947. Numerous and general?—Numerous.

22948. If you imposed these on the railway companies by State control, what becomes of their dividends?—It appears that I am more anxious for the interests of the railway shareholders who are the companies, than you are, because I am anxious for a settlement that will satisfy the railway shareholders, that will give them the value of their interests, while you appear to be willing to impose State control to the extinction or reduction of their dividends?—If it was necessary to put things right as between the railway companies and the traders I would impose State control and destroy dividends, but I don't know that any such thing is necessary.

Oct. 16, 1907.

Mr. John
Horne, C.B.,
County
Surveyor,
Limerick.Amalgamation of the
Irish lines
into three or
four systems
recommended.Suggestions as
to the allocation
of the savings result-
ing from
amalgamation.

22048 Have you not already admitted that the Irish export trade, by comparison with the trade into England, from foreign countries, have put Irish agriculture at a great disadvantage?—I don't admit it, but I say if the grievances are substantiated it is the duty of the State to go into it.

22049 Then, would you disregard the evidence of those who are engaged in trade?—I am not engaged in trade, and I don't cast a single aspersions on any man. That is their own affair.

22050 You think the evidence of men of honour and position, who come forward to give their testimony, is entitled to respect?—I think it is the Commission who have to decide that, and not me.

22051 I am asking what is your valuation of the evidence?—I cannot tell you.

22052 You prefer not to say? I put it to you again that if the Irish inland rates are injuriously higher in proportion to the service rendered than the rates into Ireland for the imported goods, surely that does prevent the development of Irish manufactures?—I say again, if the traders have a grievance it ought to be the duty of the State to put it right.

22053 As between the two methods of dealing with railway companies, by legal compulsion, and by coming to an arrangement that would secure good effects without injuring anyone, and with goodwill among all concerned, would you prefer the latter?—I don't think it is necessary.

22054 Very well. You say you would reduce the rates by litigation, by creating a small Commission?—A local Commission.

22055 An Irish Commission?—Certainly.

22056 Do you think you are lowering the cost of law by calling a court a small Commission?—Oh, well, no. My meaning about that is simply this. A single trader can hardly fight a big railway company, and we have a Department at present whose duty it is to look after that, and I would put the duty of fighting these cases on them.

22057 You would, but the Department, having fought one case and won it, curiously took fright and ran away, and never was heard of since?—It should be dismissed for that.

22058 That would apply to other departments as well as that one. Now, Mr. Horne, so long as the railways in Ireland are private property, and so long as a railway company is brought into court, call it a small Commission or a large Commission, or whatever you like, and that anyone endeavours by process of law to bring compulsion to bear on that company to make it do what it considers to be damaging to its interest, how will you prevent that company, by any device, from dictating the scale of expense to the plaintiff by engaging leading counsel?—I would let them fight a strong body like the Department, if the Department would do it. I think it is part of its duty. I say the small trader could not fight it.

22059 I take it that so long as the railways are private properties the companies have the ordinary rights of litigation, and you cannot prevent costly litigation, and the only way is to get rid of private property?—I don't assume that there is any real enmity between the railway companies and the traders. The railway companies would be cutting their own throats. What they want to do is to develop traffic.

22060 The views of the railway companies and the views of the traders about the development of traffic differ fundamentally?—Naturally they do, even if you had Government ownership.

22061 They need not necessarily differ, then, about the way to develop traffic, and it appears, I put it to you, that the system of the railway companies—of the English companies—gives favour to foreign importers, and that of the Irish companies gives favour to Irish importers, and, between the two, Irish agricultural and manufacturing industries suffer?—That is the view of those engaged in agriculture and manufacture in Ireland.

22062 As to amalgamation—are you for four lines or one?—I think three or four big companies would be enough.

22063 Have you observed that the complaints of contention between the companies, wasteful construction, superfluous trains, dislocation of traffic at junctions, and such grave faults, have been directed very much against the larger companies in the evidence before the Commission?—That is a difference between

the companies. I think it is the function of the Government to see to it.

22064 If you strengthened the companies and reduced them to four powerful companies, would not you rather increase the contention between them than diminish it?—I scarcely think so, because little branch lines and so forth never work profitably, and there is always contention and confusion.

22065 If you make four powerful companies that will have more influence and greater power in every respect, will not they be more powerful to stand up against the public, and to indulge in harassing and costly litigation?—If I believed that they would stand against the public, I would be the first to vote for State purchase. They are doing the best they can for their shareholders.

22066 But the view entertained by the railway companies of the policy proper for them to pursue in pursuit of increased profits, and the view taken by traders of the way in which the railways should be used to the advantage of the community, are views diametrically opposed?—Naturally, diametrically opposed, and always will be. If there were State railways to-morrow it would be the same.

22067 Then, would it not be better for the railway shareholders to receive an indemnity or become shareholders of a united system? Everybody who has a financial interest in the railways now could have it in the united system, or if he liked better, he could take his money into some other investment?—He could, naturally.

22068 The result of amalgamation would be that the rates complained of would remain unaltered, and the dividends of the companies would be increased by greater economy of working. Do you think that a proposal by which the companies would be enriched, and the public left subject to their present grievances would meet with public approval?—No, sir, I should be sorry to think that it would.

22069 You spoke of subsidies for improved services. You do not propose that subsidies should be applied to the reduction of rates?—Oh, no. The results from Limerick up to the west of the county are now being carried by road in the old-fashioned way that existed before the railways came into being at all, because of a difference between the railway company and the Post Office. I think that is another case where State control might come in and see what is to be done.

22070 But as between taking the subsidies out of the public funds and withdrawing the money from some other of the many urgent and pressing claims upon the public revenues in Ireland, would it not be better to deal with the reduction of rates by creating a surplus in the way I have described by the use of public credit, and by combined working under a public authority, rather than endeavour to get grants for subsidies?—Well, sir, as I said before, that is a matter altogether in the air. I am not satisfied that it would result in such great economy.

22071 If the construction of branches and the reduction of rates could be effected by a united system of public management without a call upon the public funds, do you not consider that that would be a better and a more hopeful way than the risky and doubtful method of endeavouring to extract contributions from the State when there are so many other claims?—Certainly, adopting your "if."

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH

22072 On the question of State purchase, your view is that there would not be much prospect of their being a surplus as the result of the State taking it over?—I do not think so.

22073 And if there was not a surplus it would not be available for the reduction of rates or building new bridges or for new lines?—Certainly not. There might be a loss, for all I know.

22074 In fact, your position is that there are some things you have to bear, and better bear them than try to others you know nothing of?—Something like that.

22075 You told my friend, Mr. Scobell, about the United States—that it had the largest railroad system in the world, and it was all in private hands?—Yes.

22076 But you did not tell him, what he will remember, no doubt, when reminded of it, that a good many of the States of America originally owned their own railways, and they made such a mess of it that

Conditional
approval of
construction of
the Irish rail-
ways under
public control.State own-
ship need not
necessarily
result in a
surplus applic-
able to rates' reduction.

Oct. 16, 1897.

Mr. John
Horne, esq.,
County
Surveyor,
Limerick.

Since com-
missioners have
reverted to
private owner-
ship of rail-
ways.

The amalga-
mation of the
Waterford
and Limerick
Railway with
the Great
Southern and
Western has
been worked
extensively
for Limerick.

The proba-
bility of
increased
port traffic
of the railway
was catered
to the docks
at Limerick.

The proba-
bility of a
terminal
garage for
a railway
extension to
Drumad-
logher.

they had to sell it to private owners, who have made them a success.

29975a. Mr. Sexton.—I do know that the manage-
ment of the railways in the United States is keeping
both the civil and criminal authorities of that
country.

29976. Mr. Ascroft.—I was dealing with the
specific suggestion that no country had ever reverted
to private ownership. There are various other coun-
tries—Brazil—that got rid of State railways after
they had worked them for a time, and certain other
countries—Holland and certain parts of Italy, and
other countries.

29976a. Mr. Sexton.—Indeed Holland has not.

29977. Mr. Ascroft.—There are no State-worked
railways in Holland.

29977a. Chairman.—They are State-owned.

29978. Mr. Ascroft.—They are all worked by pri-
vate companies, but they are leased from the State.
I remember, at the time of amalgamation the
Corporation of Limerick was very strongly opposed
to the Great Southern getting into Limerick and the
Harbour Board?—Yes.

29979a. I gather you are not sorry they got it?—
I do not hear many complaints in Limerick about
the working. Our passenger service is much improved
since the amalgamation. That is one point I can
speak of from my own knowledge.

29979. I think we had other evidence from Limerick
much to the same effect, that the amalgamation
had not been a disadvantage?—No, there was great
fun at one time that the railway works would be
taken away, and I believe they are as busy as ever.

29980. Then, on other point. This dock exten-
sion, would that tend to promote new exports and
imports for Limerick, or would it be largely used,
supposing the connection was made to the dock, to
take out by sea and bring in by sea stuff that the
railways carry for a considerable distance?—To bring
in by sea rather than to take it out. We have little
to take out, but a great deal to bring in.

29981. What you send out, butter and so on, could
not go by sea a long distance?—No, not free stock.

29982. What would come in?—Wheat. Of course
there is no fear of that falling off.

29983. That is coming now?—There is one firm and
I do not think it exaggeration to say it supplies half
of Munster and half of Connaught.

29984. Munster. Goodbody?—Yes.

29985. That comes in at present?—At present.

29986. You think you could get in by sea much
of the stuff that at present comes across Ireland to
Limerick by rail?—Our imports would be increased
in wheat. There is a very large timber trade, and it
is growing. It would be increased largely in the
building trade and stuff of that kind. There is a
large and increasing trade, and I believe we could
get a lot more coal if we could put it on a railway
wagon.

29987. Do you get any coal by rail?—There are
two steamers.

29988. It does not come by rail?—The Liverpool
and Glasgow boats bring in nearly all the coals.

29989. You would not be taking traffic off the rail-
ways—you would be giving them extra traffic?—I
want to give traffic to them.

29990. About the light railways, you say Limerick
would be prepared to pay a charge for them?—I
think in the case of that Drumadlogher line it would,
certainly.

29991. Have you got any suggested lines in the
county at this moment?—No. We have not. A line
was guaranteed, the Newcastle and Tralee, and we
have got rid of that by the amalgamation.

29992. Now you have got none?—No, sir.

29993. Not having been bitten you are not shy?—
Perhaps not.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON POE.

29995. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—At the time of the
amalgamation I thought the Harbour Commissioners
and the Corporation were prepared to support the
Bill, provided the Railway Company made it.

Mr. Craker, Birmingham, Solicitor.—I do not know
about the Corporation.

29995a. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—The question was
considered. In addition to the coal that comes by
steamer to Limerick—does not a considerable quantity
come by canal down the Shannon?—I am not sure
about coal. I think the chief traffic in the canal is
Grainne's porter.

29996. At any rate, the principal traffic comes down
the canal, and is distributed from Limerick?—From
Limerick.

29997. And in that way the canal traffic is also han-
dled by the cartage rates when it gets down?—
That is why I mentioned the dock connection—that
I pointed out that there would be an advantage in
connecting the canal with Limerick Dock also. That
is possible.

29998. The whole thing is part and parcel of the
same connection, and deals with the canal as well
as the shipping traffic. With regard to light rail-
ways, you spoke about the Newcastle project having
been thrown out by the Privy Council. Do you know
on what grounds it was thrown out?—I do not know
it is so very long ago, though I was there at the time.
It passed both Grand Jurors—Limerick and Cork, and
the Privy Council threw it out.

29999. Are you prepared to say that the district
would do something in the way of guarantee?—I
think it would be very likely that they would give
a guarantee to some extent.

30000. With regard to the extension from Limerick
to Bruff, surely, looking at the map, that small tri-
angular area lying between Limerick, Limerick Jun-
ction, and Charleville, would hardly justify another
light railway? Bruff is within a short distance of
Roscree, and I should have thought that station
would have afforded plenty of facilities?—Even with
such a short distance there is very little traffic be-
tween Bruff and Roscrea. They run long cars,
and use cart traffic on the roads.

30001. You spoke of the possibility of developing
the traffic in farm produce by Roscrea. I think at the
last meeting of the Great Southern and Western Com-
pany the Chairman referred to that very point?—
That is all that could be expected, and it would be
in the interests of the railway companies themselves.

30002. At any rate, in your opinion, the railway
companies are doing their best to facilitate and
develop the traffic?—Certainly. They would be going
against their own interests if they did not.

30003. I gather also that in your experience it is
in the interest of railway companies, as well as of
the traders generally and of agriculturists, to lower
the rates in the hope of developing traffic?—That is
my belief, sir.

30004. I take it that is one of the reasons why you
are opposed to anything like State ownership—that
you think under the existing system—perhaps com-
plicated with a little more enterprise, that the interests
of the railways can be best attained by reducing the
rates to such a point as will give a small profit, and
will develop a large volume of trade and traffic?—
Quite true, sir.

30005. On the same principle that small profits and
quick returns pay better than large profits and slow
returns. I think Mr. Sexton put it to you that the
only effect of amalgamation into one, or perhaps
three, systems would be that the rates would be re-
tained at their present level, in which case the public
would gain no benefit, while any economy in working
expenses or management would go to swell the profits
of the shareholders. I want to ask you, however, if
such an assumption is altogether fair? Is it not
more reasonable—and judging by your own experience
of the way in which you say the railway companies
try to develop traffic—more natural to expect that if
there were amalgamation under private control, the
rates would be lowered without any decrease in profit,
owing to the large development of traffic which such
a concession of rates would probably bring about?—I
expect that would be the result.

30006. There would be no reason to think other-
wise?—No.

30007. Then as to the point whether or not the rail-
ways should be under State control. I suppose you
will admit that no other commercial undertaking

Railway
extension to
Limerick
Docks referred
by Great
Southern and
Western Com-
pany previous
to amalga-
mation.

29994. With regard to the railway connection be-
tween the port and station at the time of the amalga-
mation, was the question brought before the Great
Southern Railway Company?—I am not certain
about that.

29994a. Mr. Ascroft.—Oh, yes, it was indeed.
They tried to get it out of the Great Southern, and
they would not agree.

Mr. Craker, Birmingham, Solicitor.—We tried to
make it once and there was local opposition.

is anything like so hedged in by State control as the railways are at the present moment?—That is so; but the railway companies exist as a huge monopoly given by Parliament, and so they ought to be, to a certain degree, under State control.

30007a. I quite appreciate that argument. But is it any justification for the extreme rigour of the control now exercised by the State? Take the position of the railway companies. They have to face an increase in the cost of fuel, and in that of labour, of steel, iron, and other materials, and whilst other commercial undertakings can meet increased cost of production by an increase in the selling price of the commodities in which they deal—as we know many of them have done—railway companies are deterred by Act of Parliament from recouping themselves against any increase in the cost of transport to which they may be exposed through dearer fuel, labour, and other causes: is that not the case?—That is so I have seen it discussed recently.

30008. Instead, therefore, of extending State control, there would seem some ground for urging less onerous restrictions on the railway companies. To turn to another point, however, raised in your evidence, in connection with the steamer service formerly running between Foyens and Kilmuck, as the Chairman has ruled that this subject hardly comes within our terms of reference, I will, of course, not follow the matter up, beyond asking whether your evidence is meant to imply that, so far from Kilmuck and that district having been developed by the West Clare Railway system, the reverse has been the case, and that the district was better served by the steamer than it now is by the railway?—It has declined very much. Larnech has developed, and also Milford Malbay and Spanish Point, places close by. They are improving since the railway—the West Clare Railway—was opened.

30009. Is that failure in West Clare—that decline you speak of—due to any want of capacity or energy in West Clare? We have had a good deal of evidence here as to the inefficiency, and so on, of the West Clare Railway?—I would not like to say. There seems to be a difficulty in managing it. It is, after all, only a small undertaking. The failure is largely due to the withdrawal of the summer steamboat that used to run between Foyens and Kilmuck.

30010. Are we to take it that way—that the railway could not develop the traffic—but only take it in another direction?—I would not like to say that altogether. It is a narrow gauge line, and the passage is very slow.

30011. Of course we have evidence that it was carried on at great expense. There is only one other point, and I don't think it has been touched upon, and that is, I would like you to explain what you mean by your reference to the Postal Service being conducted by cart instead of railway?—I did touch upon it in answer to one of Mr. Seron's questions. There is a dispute between the Post Office and the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, and the mails there at Limerick, to the west of the County of Limerick, have been carried by cart for the past two years or more. I think there are four trains daily, four trains each way, available.

30012. That is owing to some dispute between the Post Office and the railway authorities?—I think somebody should see to it—somebody in the State.

Examined by Lord Penzance.

30013. You were asked about large vessels getting up to Limerick, laden up to 3,000 tons. What draft of water have you every day at Limerick?—About eighteen feet in the dock, average.

30014. Can vessels go in at any state of the tide or any hour of day; can they go right up to Limerick; can they go inside; is there eighteen feet of water?—No, we have to wait for the tide.

30015. They can only come into Limerick twice a day?—A very big ship on the spring tide, and others at ordinary high water.

30016. Would you have a draft of water so that large vessels could come in at every tide?—Do you mean at low water?

30017. No. There are two tides, do I understand, one day and one night; one, say, at six o'clock in the morning, and one at six o'clock at night?—Roughly, the neap tide is sixteen feet and the spring tide twenty feet.

30018. The lowest tide is twelve feet?—Yes.

30019. Clearance?—There is twelve feet when it is high tide; not at low water?—No. Vessels could not come up at low water. That is high water on an ordinary neap tide, sixteen feet.

30020. Lord Penzance.—Isn't that the reason why you cannot expect an export trade regularly at Limerick? Again, is that not the cause why Limerick sends cattle, hams and calves by long railway routes? Is not this the cause, and not that the distance happens to be a little over?—I don't think it is. Two steamers plying weekly to Glasgow and Liverpool go on, and they are nearly always empty going out.

30021. We have evidence that cattle don't decrease in value by being consigned in steamers which are large enough. You can have vessels drawing eighteen feet of water, and you could carry cattle safer from Limerick to Glasgow or Liverpool direct rather than across country to Dublin, Cork or Belfast, and then transshipping them?—There is very little cattle traffic between Limerick and Glasgow, although we have a weekly service. I would say there is not any.

30022. You say you have large and successful clearances. Why, then, is it that Limerick imports so much butter?—They make good butter and make margarine as well. Why they import it I don't know. I suppose people abroad are fonder of our butter than we are ourselves.

30023. You make butter at Limerick; you export your own butter and import butter?—I am not aware whether we eat our own butter. We certainly export our own, and we also make margarine and sell it.

30024. As to railways, you said, I think, to Mr. Seron, that State purchase would kill industry in Ireland. What industry would it kill? Small industries, I think, you said. You urged it strongly in examination when you said you did not approve of the Irish railways being made into one, or being under State management. That is to say, either two or three railways was what you were in favour of; but you did not even object to only one provided it is a private railway, and in addition you would have some public or State control over that? What difference is it if the railway belongs to the State, and how would it kill industries?—That was not what I meant. I mean to say that if you purchase the railways by the State you will kill one of the few industries we have that not wholly failed. Are not the railways an Irish industry?

30025. What is the industry?—The railway industry.

30026. You could not kill the railways by the State undertaking them; they would not become useless to the travelling public. They would not cease to exist?—They would cease to exist as an Irish industry.

30027. Mr. Seron.—Cease to exist?—As an Irish industry.

30028. Clearance.—He means that you will kill them as a separate industry if they are run as State lines. But you suggest they should be killed in this way—you would amalgamate them into three?—Yes; with Mr. Seron's "id."

30029. Then you suggest amalgamation?—Yes; it would remove them. It is not killing them. I want to absorb the little branches.

30030. What difference would that make, if there were three railways instead of only one in Ireland?—I would not care so long as it was not a single company.

30031. What is the difference? If there were only three railways that would absorb a large number; if there was only one, all it would mean would be it would absorb a few more?—If there is only one it absorbs the whole thing.

30032. You draw the line between three and one?—What I want is three or four companies working in a certain amount of competition. That would be better than one company.

30033. You consider that would be better than State purchase?—Oh, yes, better than State purchase. I would like to see the Irish railways as an Irish industry.

30034. You said that it would kill Irish industry and yet you favour amalgamation into three, but you draw the line at one?—Yes.

30035. Lord Penzance.—Do you mean this—that the industry would not cease to exist, but that the lines would be so badly managed that they would cease to exist; as not that what you mean by killing it?—I

Oct. 22, 1907

Mr. John
Heron, C.B.,
County
Surveyor,
Limerick.

The question
of better
imports to
Limerick.

Objections to
the substitution
of State
ownership for
the present
private ownership
of Irish
railways.

If State
purchased
the railways
would cease to
exist as an
Irish industry.

Amalgamation
into three
or four
systems
advocated.

Get 18, 1897.
Mr. John
Horne, esq.,
County
Surveyor,
Limerick.

Objections to
the substitu-
tion of State
ownership for
the present
private owner-
ship of Irish
railways.

don't want to have the management of the lines taken out of the hands of Irishmen who have started them and carried them on with more or less success as an industry in their own country.

30036. Mr. Screeve.—To put them into the hands of Irishmen?—No, that would not be. You would very likely get a commission of foreigners; made in Germany, perhaps.

30036a. Oh, no; we exclude that.

30037. Lord Parnell.—You think Irishmen would come to work the railways and foreigners would come in?—Yes.

30038. Then they would not be killed at all. Where then would they be killed, even if they were under the control of the Government?—I suppose you mean the British Government?—I don't mean the British Government or any other Government. I don't care what Government it is as long as they do the business.

30039. I cannot understand your evidence, it is so contradictory; you have no faith in a State-owned railway. You think that under the Government the railways would not be managed well; that they would not treat the public properly, fairly, or honestly; but still you would give power to the British or other Government to control the railways?—It would be their duty, sir, to hear cases of complaint and adjudicate upon them.

The lines
should remain
private com-
mercial
enterprises.

30040. Mr. Screeve.—Your point is that the Irish railways should remain as at present, as commercial enterprises in private hands, carried on to earn dividends?—Yes.

30040a. Lord Parnell.—He does not say that.

30041. Chairman.—He says not. He objects to only one railway, but he would have three or four.

30041a. Mr. Screeve.—Well, then, one or more; and that they should be carried on upon commercial bases in private hands?—Yes, by Irishmen in Ireland.

Mr. J. H.
Screeve,
Managing
Director,
London
Quarries,
Limerick.

Location of
Longstone
quarries.

The station-
ery traffic
arrangements
by the Great
Southern and
Western Rail-
way to
encourage the
industry.

Mr. J. H. SCREEVE examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30042. You are Managing Director of the Longstone Quarries, Limerick?—Yes.

30043. How long have you had possession of these quarries?—About four years.

30044. What is the next railway station?—Pallas.

30045. How far is that from the quarries?—Four miles.

30046. With the object of getting the necessary accommodation for dealing with the traffic from your quarries, did you make any arrangement with the Company, the Great Southern and Western?—Yes; I approached them at the first instance, and they met me very fairly.

30047. As they met you fairly, it would be interesting to know in what way they met you. Will you tell us?—In the first place, there was no siding at Drunkara, from which station I wanted to work. It was merely a flag station for passengers, and unless I got wagon accommodation there it would be impossible to work my traffic. I did not ask them to put down a siding themselves at their own expense. I did not think it would be a fair business proposal, to go to business men with, from one business man to another. I asked them to construct a station at my own expense, on condition that they gave reduced rates for traffic, and after some time they did so. I may say Mr. Neale took the matter up in an encouraging and sympathetic spirit. It took some time to settle all the details, some nine months or so, but, on the whole, I was very well satisfied with the arrangement we came to, and with the way in which he met me.

30048. That seems very satisfactory so far as your relations with the Great Southern and Western Company are concerned. This is an absolute case where by your co-operation with the railway company, and the railway company co-operating with you, a new industry has been established?—Yes; I take it as a typical case. It is absolutely new in the county, and until I took it up afforded practically no employment. I was a man with no influence to get anyone to assist me in getting terms from the railway company. I went and made a fair business proposal. People are not usually prepared to become responsible for a thing that involves any risk. I said them to meet me, and they agreed if I would meet the cost of making the siding in the first instance, they would refund it to me. They would refund what

30049. Mr. Screeve.—You admit that the existing companies would never make the branches required in Ireland to develop the country?—Not without some encouragement.

30050. You would rather retain the existing companies than buy up the railways and put them into the hands of a representative body of Irishmen, who would use their resources under that system to make the branches and other provision that Ireland requires?—I don't see yet where the resources are to come from.

30051. From the application of public credit to the finance of the railway system, from the saving of having only one system, and the saving arising from concentrated working?—Then are two or three other little things I would like to mention. One is the desire of the people of the City of Limerick to have an earlier train to Dublin that will get in time for the North Wall boat. This boat leaves at eleven o'clock, and the hour of the train is 8.15, and it does not get in until 12.30. Another matter is an improved service between Limerick Junction and Charleville. People going to business at Limerick are detained hours at a time often at Limerick Junction.

30052. Chairman.—These are matters you have raised with the railway company, I suppose?—Yes. I was asked to mention them here.

30053. The proper course is to communicate with the railway companies, and see if they can do anything. What is the next?—At Limerick Junction, we often have to wait, and there is a hideous loss of time; every train that comes in has to be shunted.

30054. Shunted; every train?—Yes; to get to its platform every train has to be shunted.

30055. That will all be on the notes.

I had spent in constructing the siding, but not until I had paid more than the equivalent in traffic, leaving a margin for the working of the traffic all the time.

30056. And they, in addition, made satisfactory rates?—Yes, sir; the long-distance rates are satisfactory.

30057. What the difference is, how you repay them. I don't think that is necessary to be gone into?—The arrangement is satisfactory, that is the main point?—Quite so.

30058. How many men do you employ?—The number fluctuates between forty and fifty. We are now making arrangements to increase the number and enlarge our business.

30059. None of these men would have been employed by you at that quarry unless you had got these facilities at this particular place, this siding and so on, for the handling of traffic?—There might have been four or five men employed. The work was essential, and the siding was essential to enable the work to be carried on.

30060. Is it an industry that is likely to grow, do you think?—I think so. At present we are not able to fill our orders.

30061. It is growing now?—Yes. On account of that we are increasing our capital.

30062. Then it is growing?—It is.

30063. This industry is developed and progressing in consequence of the railway facilities given by the Great Southern and Western?—It would be quite impossible to work it without their assistance and co-operation. With your permission I will give a few of the rates.

30064a. We do not want the rates, because the arrangements are satisfactory.

Examined by Mr. SCREEVE.

30065. Your experience, Mr. Screeve, too rare according to the evidence, appears to indicate that valuable results can be secured by Irish industries when reasonable concessions are made by the railways?—Yes, by co-operation.

30066. When reasonable concessions are made?—They made them.

Examined by Mr. AEWORTH.

30065. What is the rate to Dublin, North Wall?—You might say Kingsbridge. I put in North Wall as the point of extreme mileage that it would be carried at that rate.

30066. It does not mean that you ship at North Wall?—No; the North Wall rate was to supply material to the Port and Docks Beerd there. Any shipping trade is from Limerick, but the total absence of railway connection with the docks makes it extremely difficult, and very seriously hampers the industry. I would ship at Limerick; but there is no means of getting to the Docks. I am negotiating on that matter.

30067. Dublin, North Wall, is just over a half-penny per ton?—Yes, 54d. per ton per mile.

30068. You have to cart it from the quarry to the station?—The amount of traffic would not pay to put a siding to the works.

30069. How far is the nearest point to the railway? Some two miles.

30070. You could not work that by means of a railway?—I am in favour of something like an overhead trolley or aerial system. I think that would be better.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON P.E.

30071. You say that specially low rates are necessary for the development of the mineral resources of the country, but unfortunately we have not got many minerals to develop. Two millions of tons is the whole amount of mineral traffic on the Irish systems in 1905. Whatever low rates you might have, not much development would be possible?—I think, as regards our mineral resources, that without special facilities new industries could not successfully compete with similar ones in England and Wales, which have already existed for a considerable time, and are firmly established. Unless we get some assistance we would not be able to do very much.

30072. We want a good deal more scientific research; there is very little expert evidence as to the value of our mineral resources?—I agree with that.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

30073. Why do you send your produce round by Dublin and Cork; do you export any?—Only a very few cargoes, and all by way of Limerick.

30074. You have got certain rates, I would like to have them put down on the notes. You have a rate to North Wall from your works, I take it.

Mr. AEWORTH.—From Drogheda siding.

30075. Lord PIERCE.—From the siding where you load the wagons?—Yes.

30076. To both stations in Dublin?—Yes.

30077. From Drogheda station to Dublin—what is it?—5s. 6d. per ton.

30078. What is the distance?—122 miles to North Wall.

30079. What is that equal to?—54d. per ton per mile.

30080. You have a rate to Cork?—Yes; 4s.

30081. What is that?—The distance is sixty-nine miles, equal to 69d. per ton per mile.

30082. Waterford?—Four shillings; distance sixty-six miles; equal to 73d. per ton per mile.

30083. Limerick, I see it is eleven miles. Do you cart it all the way?—No, we cart it to the station and send it by rail.

30084. What is the charge?—Eleven miles, 1s. 3d. per ton, equal to 135d. per ton per mile.

30085. You consider these fair rates and they were agreed to after discussion by the railway company?—Yes, taking into account that they have to earn dividends, they could not do much better. I think it is very fair.

30086. Mr. SCOTCH.—You have been very fortunate?—I think that is so. Other cases may be unfortunate. That, however, is my experience.

Oct. 16, 1907.

Mr. J. M. Scallan,
Managing
Director,
Longford
Quarries,
Limerick.

The stone
rates from
Drogheda
to Dublin,
Cork,
Waterford,
and Limerick.

The Committee then adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FIFTIETH PUBLIC SITTING--THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17th, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART, Chairman, Right Hon. Lord FIBBIX, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JERTIS, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHESON PUGH, C.B., and Mr. THOMAS SEXTON;

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Oct. 17, 1907.

Dr. Edward
Thompson,
Omagh.

Dr. EDWARD THOMPSON examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30087 Doctor, I think you live in Omagh?—Yes.
30088 And I right in assuming that you were formerly a member of Parliament?—Yes, for North Monaghan, in the last Parliament.

30089 And you have for years taken an interest in the railway problem?—I have, in all matters relating to Ireland.

30090 Not only locally, but generally?—Yes.

30091 I suppose your object in coming here this morning is to deal with the subject generally, and not in detail?—In a very general manner. Not being a commercial man engaged in business I know very little about rates and fares.

30092 You are a medical man?—Yes, but I travel a great deal.

30093 It is not entirely a new subject to you?—No, it is not.

30094 I know you have for years taken an interest in the railways of this country?—Yes; I have been observant.

Allegation
that Irish
railway rates
generally are
excessive.

30095 First of all, speaking generally of the rates on Irish railways?—Speaking generally I cannot give very much evidence myself from my own personal knowledge as regards rates on goods, not being a commercial man, and not taking very much interest in the matter except generally; but the impression, of course, which has been conveyed to the members of the Commission is that the rates upon Irish produce generally are excessive in this country. I happen to be director of a small company, a shirt factory, in Omagh. I can speak of the rates as regards the carriage of shirts to England, and I can support what has already been said by the managing director of the company, Mr. Lynch. Compared with Derry, Omagh is greatly handicapped in the matter of rates. The carriage per ton of shirts from Omagh to London is 35s. a ton, whereas from Derry it is 43s. 6d., and when that is the case an industry of the sort we have in Omagh, a small shirt factory, is considerably handicapped as compared with Derry. Of course I know the reason of the rate from Derry being lower, but all the same the handicap to Omagh remains.

30096 Whatever the reason may be, Omagh is practically penalised to a certain extent with regard to its rates as compared with Londonderry?—I think its development is impeded on account of the difference in rates to various places in England and Scotland.

30097 Not speaking generally, do you agree that there are various parts of this country that require railway accommodation?—Yes, I am only speaking about my own county, Tyrone. I don't know very much about other counties.

30098 Owing your evidence to the county?—I think the railway communication of Tyrone could be very greatly improved. For instance, a large part of the county has no railway communication whatever. That is the district in the neighbourhood of Fintona, Gortin, and Greenacres. Most of the people in that part of the world are very anxious that some effort should be made to relieve them, because undoubtedly they suffer serious drawbacks in not being able to bring their produce to market. The district is rather mountainous. There is no communication whatever for miles in any direction. My suggestion would be,

if the Government helped to build a railway, that it should run, not, as has been suggested, from Duncannonagh but from Strabane, and should go on to Cookstown, or else that it should go from Newtownswewart. There is a line at present being made from Letterkenny to Strabane. My idea is it would be a great advantage to that part of the country if the line could be continued from Strabane to Cookstown, or, as another alternative route, from Newtownswewart to Cookstown, which would avoid the Sperrin Mountains. It has been said that if a railway was made through that part of the world it would not pay its expenses. I think that is a mistake. It would go through the most populous district in the county. From Newtownswewart is the shorter route, and it would avoid the Sperrin Mountains.

30099 What would be the distance between those two places?—About 25 miles from Newtownswewart to Cookstown, and about 10 miles more from Strabane to Cookstown.

30100 As to the advantage to the district of a light railway, I don't think there can be any doubt, but I think you will agree that such a railway as not likely to be constructed by private enterprise?—I don't think it is.

30101 And there is no likelihood of the district guaranteeing interest on the outlay?—I don't think there is; but I think if the Government helped the County Council would help. I myself think in the development of Ireland the people are inclined to lean too much on the Government, and while the Government should certainly help the country, they have been depending too much on the Government. I won't dwell on this point, because I don't want to dive back into ancient history, but the Tyrone County Council are a very enlightened body, and would be inclined to help if any suggestion was made to provide the communication suggested. I know there is a strong feeling among the people. I travel a great deal on that part of the world among them. I know myself they have extreme difficulty in doing anything to help themselves. There is also said to be very considerable mineral wealth undeveloped among the Sperrin Mountains.

30102 Is there any other particular part of the county where you think it would be an advantage to have a light railway?—Yes. If you take the Clogher Valley Tramway, the original idea, I believe, when that railway was proposed was to connect Maguabridge with Dunganess, running right through the valley. For some extraordinary reason that I don't know they made it to run to Anghadacy, and went on to Tyrone. The result of course, is that while it is undoubtedly a great convenience to the people living in the neighbourhood, that tramway might be greatly developed by the following method—that is by continuing a branch line from Railygawley to Dunganess, and joining on Clogher with Fintona. If you did that you would have Clogher the centre of the county; you would have these lines practically dividing it into four parts. If that was done I cannot say whether it would pay or not, but I fancy it would pay better than the present tramway does, and it would be a great convenience, as far as the people are concerned.

30103 Practically there would be direct communication between Fintona and Omagh?—Yes, by a small

More railway
accommodation
has suggested
in the County
Tyrone.

Extension at
Fintona,
Gortin and
Greenacres
suggested.

fine, seven or eight miles long, you would connect Fintona with the Clogher Valley; by another line you connect Ballypawley with the town of Dungannon, and carry out the original intention.

30108. There would be two spurs from the Clogher Valley—one to Dungannon and another to Fintona?—Yes. It has been proposed that a line should be made direct from Omagh to Clogher. I don't see that that would be practicable or of any great advantage. You can take advantage of the Great Northern as far as Fintona, and by a small branch you can join Fintona to Clogher. You can see by looking at a map of the County Tyrone what a great advantage that would be. I often have to go to Fivestown and Clogher. If I go by train I have to go the whole way around by Maguinnessbridge. You can see the round it would be. It would be an easy line to construct in easy way.

30109. These suggestions are confined to the County Tyrone?—Yes; I know it very particularly. As to railway development in other parts of Ireland, I know that there is great room for improvement.

30110. Have you personally experienced delay at junctions in consequence of connections not working?—Certainly. I know most about the Great Northern line, and I may be allowed to say this. I have travelled a great deal in this country, in America, and in England, and I don't know any better managed line than the Great Northern. The rates may be excessive, but, as far as management of the line is concerned, and in regard to the civility of the officials, and everything that should make the railway what it is, I consider that the Great Northern line in its general management will bear favourable comparison with any line I have ever travelled over. But, even on the best managed concern, there are some little things that are wrong. As regards rates, I do not say anything, because I don't know any instance. There is a train that said to leave—I believe it has been altered in consequence of the representation I made that I would bring it under the notice of the Commission—which left Derry at five o'clock, arriving in Omagh about six in the evening, and then it went on to Dungannon. If you wanted, as I very often do, to go to Cookstown the train arrived in Dungannon about ten minutes after the train had left Dungannon for Cookstown. Lately that has been altered. I believe the train has been altered to five o'clock instead of 5.15 from Derry. The result is that these trains do not meet at Dungannon and that inconvenience has been remedied. There is another inconvenience that is very considerable by the night mail from Belfast. It leaves Belfast at ten o'clock and comes to Portadown, where travellers are kept almost three-quarters of an hour for no earthly reason that I can see. I made representations to Mr. Plow about this thing, and I believe it is not the fault of the railway company, but of the Post Office authorities. There is no reason in the wide world why passengers should not go direct from Belfast to Omagh.

Mr. Plow.—It is the 10 p.m. train from Belfast. It is a Post Office train.

Witness.—Representations have been made to the Post Office of the inconvenience caused to the public by the arrangement. Mr. Plow, I believe, would be quite willing to alter that train. Hard-working individuals like myself and others sometimes like to take a run from Omagh to a theatre in, for instance, Belfast. I have often done that myself. You have to leave the theatre to go away by this train at ten o'clock. It would be a great convenience to the public if the train was made to leave at eleven o'clock instead of ten. There is no reason why passengers should be detained three-quarters of an hour at Portadown.

Mr. Plow.—With regard to that train, we have asked the Post-Office if they would agree to make it later. It is a postal scheduled train, and they have declined to do so, giving a certain reason, which is a purely local reason, for their decision. Under these circumstances we could not alter it.

Witness.—At the same time the public are allowed to suffer all this inconvenience.

30111. Chairman.—What you mean is the train, as far as you know and believe, can be made to leave Belfast much later, to the great convenience of the public who would arrive at their destination at the same time as now?—Yes. That has been acknowledged to me by railway officials.

30107. That is your view?—Yes. It would be a great convenience, not only for purposes of pleasure, but also of business. On a cold winter night Portadown Station is not the pleasantest place at which to spend three-quarters of an hour uselessly. A train leaves Omagh at five o'clock, arriving in Londonderry at 5.30. Almost as soon as the train from Omagh arrives in Derry a train going to Portadown also leaves. The consequence is that anyone from Omagh going to Portadown, if, as often happens, the train is late in arriving and the other train is punctual in leaving, has to stay in Derry for the night. I have known many friends of my own having to spend the whole night in Derry simply because the railway companies don't come to some arrangement as regards altering the trains to suit the public.

30112. What company run from Derry to Portadown?—The Midland Company of England, which is much harder to deal with than the old Northern Counties Company. That Railway has not been at all improved by its connection with the Midland Railway of England, because since it was taken over, instead of being, as many people in that part of the world believed it would be, developed, it has gone back. It is not half as good a railway as it used to be. That is my experience of it.

30113. That is rather different from the evidence we had yesterday?—I can only tell you my own experience. Another thing. A train arrives at the Northern Counties terminus from Portadown at eleven o'clock. There is a train leaves Derry for Omagh and stations beyond it at ten past eleven. The train coming to the Northern Counties terminus is often five or ten minutes late. The result is we have over an hour to wait; there is a capital train leaves Derry at 12.15 for Omagh, but it is an express. But at present, if you leave Portadown at twenty to ten o'clock you arrive in Derry just in time to be late as far as connection with the Great Northern Railway is concerned.

30114. Yes, I think. Do you blame the Midland for that?—Yes, because the Midland train is generally somewhat late.

30115. Chairman.—Does the Great Northern train wait for it?—They have excellent stationmasters at the stations of both companies in Derry, and if a passenger telegraphs the Great Northern stationmaster or gets the Northern Counties stationmaster to do so they would keep the train for a passenger, but you could not expect them to keep it more than a minute or two. The passengers have to go across the river.

30116. What is the distance between the termini of the two companies?—There is the river to cross. It is fully a mile round. There is a ferry going across if you have no luggage. There are four railway companies in Derry.

30117. Is there any physical connection between them two?—No.

30118. Lord Purcell.—You can go from one to the other across the bridge?—Not passenger trains.

Mr. Plow.—That is only for goods wagons. Everything has to be turned on a turn-table.

30119. Chairman.—That is out of the question for passengers?—Yes. On the Northern Counties Railway, after 5.40 in the evening, there is no train whatever going towards Portadown, Coleraine, or any of these places; so, if you miss your connection, coming from Omagh, you are stuck in Derry for the night.

30120. Do you know anything about the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway?—I do, indeed. It is the worst railway in the whole world without any exception. I have travelled on it and suffered great inconvenience and discomfort upon it. In fact it is a perfect anachronism. It is a proprietary railway, and every inconvenience that can be caused to the public, both as the conveyance of goods and of passengers, is caused by that railway. I suppose the Commissioners are aware that the Banagher and Londonderry section of it pays well, and, notwithstanding that that is so, the inconvenience caused even upon that part of the railway is very considerable, but it is nothing compared with the inconvenience caused on the branch from the junction beyond Londonderry to Letterkenny—dirty carriages, not lighted, bad stations, under-paid officials, especially engine-drivers, the worst sort of coal burned, the sanitary arrangements at stations abominable, no satisfactory accommo-

Oct. 17, 1907.

Dr. Edward Thompson, Omagh.

Suggested improvements in the train connections with the Midland Railway at Derry.

The Midland of England working at the Northern Counties has a disadvantage in the old company's methods.

Complaint as to most-rankest train working at Derry.

Allegation that the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway is the worst in the world.

Management of the Letterkenny Railway by the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Company condemned.

Oct. 27, 1905.

By Edward Thompson, Otago.

The Carronagh and Barmoreport State line insufficiently and inconveniently worked by the Lough Swilly Company.

State purchase of the Irish railway recommended.

An Irish Board of Control and its constitution suggested.

Control by an Irish authority essential to secure the best results from State purchase.

The disparity between second-class fares and third-class fares in Ireland and there is operation on English railways.

Present system of appointing railway officials condemned.

tion in the railway earnings; while the railway station at Derry is simply like an ordinary rough coach.

30118. Mr. Stenton.—They are paying seven per cent.—They are paying eight, and the Government helps them by giving them control of these branch lines to Carronagh, and also to Barmoreport.

30119. Chairman.—They work them?—Yes, in the most inefficient and the most unbecoming manner possible.

30120. Your view on that subject seems to correspond with those of other witnesses who have been before us?—I don't wish to exaggerate, but what I say is the absolute truth. I have experienced it on innumerable journeys on that line. Of course, things will be greatly improved by the line now being made from Letterkenny to Strabane, because that will be properly managed. It is nearly finished.

30121. On the general question have you considered whether it would be in the interests of Ireland if the railways were purchased by the State?—Certainly; I believe so.

30122. They should be under Irish control?—I think so. I have been thinking over that a great deal, and I would imagine that a board composed of five directors, three railway experts, and two representatives of the public would make an admirable board, and the method by which I would suggest, if the thing is ever contemplated, the election of the two representatives would be that one should be elected by the chairman of the County Councils, and one elected by a constituent body formed by the grand juries, each grand jury to elect one, and these to come together and elect one representative of the grand juries. You would then have both parties represented.

30123. At any rate, whatever the arrangements for purchase, you are strongly of opinion that there should be an Irish authority to control the railways?—If there was not an Irish authority I would not advocate it. If it was to go to an English authority I would not have anything to do with it at all. Without saying anything offensive to you or any other Englishman I am a great believer in my own country.

30124. Do you really say in your judgment, after proper consideration, you think that it would be manifestly to the interests of the country?—I think there cannot be a shadow of doubt about it. If you had a board composed of, say, three managers and—

30125. Near mind the board; we will assume the Irish authority to control the railways?—Yes.

30126. Do you think that is the only way in which these districts that are mentioned, in Tyrone and in many other places in Ireland, could get additional railway accommodation?—I think that is the only way that you can have uniform rates for passengers and goods.

30127. On the point of construction, that is the only way that these districts could be provided with light railways?—I think so.

30128. Is it your opinion also that under such an authority, with such sanction of the railways, rates and fares might be considerably reduced?—Yes, and the lines thoroughly well managed. There is a matter I want to mention about railway fares, and that is the extraordinary disparity between second-class fares and third-class fares on Irish as compared with English railways. A third-class return ticket from Oughter to Dublin is eighteen shillings, and a second-class is twenty-eight shillings. The distance is 123 miles. From Holyhead to London the distance is 255 miles, double the distance, and the difference between the second and third-class fares is only 3s. 6d. For the same distance therefore the distance in this country relatively is 52, between second and third-class fares, as compared with 3s. 6d. in England.

30129. I think we are all of opinion that the difference between second and third-class fares is out of proportion. We are practically agreed as to that. Several witnesses have given evidence on that point, and I don't think you need enlarge on it. There is no doubt that the difference is very great?—Another point to which I wish to refer is the appointment of officials to these railways. I think it would be a great matter, and it could be more easily done if the railways were managed by the State, that it should be arranged by public competition and public examination. There has been a good deal of witness in this country over the method of the appointment of the officials of the railways, that is, the junior officials and it would be best to get them by public competition.

30130. Surely you would leave that to the Irish authority?—Yes, once you establish it. As regards the Letterkenny Railway, I want to be under your notice a fact to show the narrow spirit of the board—practically it is not a board because the railway belongs to two men, Mr. McFarland and the representative of Mr. McCree; those are really the two owners of the railway. Practically, it is not a shareholders' railway at all. There are very few shareholders in it. These two men control the whole line. To show the way in which they manage, a gentleman at Buncrana makes this statement in a letter to me:—"Making the line to Carronagh the Government purchased a field just outside Buncrana Station for the purpose of getting ballast. When the line was completed this field was handed over to the Lough Swilly Company. Being so convenient to the railway station it was retained by a number of herring buyers for the purpose of curing their fish, the herring fishing being an undertaking only started in Buncrana for the last four or five years. Although the Lough Swilly Railway Company were getting between £400 and £500 each season for the carriage of fish, yet they charged each herring buyer a rent of 60 pence month for about ten square yards of this field." That is the railway company of Mr. McFarland. "Notwithstanding that this land was presented to them free by the Government, and the railway company were making about £50 each season out of this, yet they would not send out the morning train to Carronagh a couple of hours earlier unless the Government gave them a substantial subsidy. In consequence the people of Carronagh, with increased railway facilities, are getting their letters two hours later in the mornings than twenty years ago." That the result of the Lough Swilly Railway Company. There is another matter that I wish to bring under the notice of the Commission. I mentioned it also to Mr. Pless. There is a small tramway runs from Fintona Junction to Fintona town. It is a most dangerous place. There have been frequent accidents upon it. There have been men killed upon it in recent years. It is a train walked by horses. No horse lives more than two or three years there. I have experience of the tramway. Recently there was a man run over and killed there. The shunting is all done by means of this horse. I suggested to Mr. Pless how the difficulty and inconvenience and danger could be got over as regards that tramway if the rails were taken up and a hard, good macadamised road run up to the junction. It is only a distance of one-third of a mile. The goods station could be put up at the junction, and the danger and inconvenience to the public got rid of by means of the suggested roadway. I think Mr. Pless agrees with me.

Mr. Pless.—I am afraid there are two sides to the question. There are markets in Fintona.

Chairman. The doctor has made his complaint. As far as we are concerned I think it scarcely comes within our province.

Resumed by Mr. Stenton.

30131. I think the Imperial Government is practically the owner of three of those four railways worked by the Lough Swilly Company?—I believe it is.

30132. It is mortgagee in possession of the Letterkenny line and is constructor and owner of the other two?—Yes.

30133. The management of the Barmoreport line and the Letterkenny line has been the subject of incessant, and I may say, bitter, controversy?—It has.

30134. What inference should you draw from that as to the fitness of the Imperial Government to become the manager of Irish lines?—I would not at all agree with the Imperial Government becoming the manager. It should be an Irish authority. I would not have the Imperial Government managing it at all. I think we are quite able to manage our own railways with an Irish authority.

30135. Apart from the question of rates and fares, the Imperial Government seems to be ill-equipped for entering on the preliminary process of getting the lines well worked?—Yes, and as far as the construction of this line is concerned everybody in that part of the world knows what occurred. When the Killybegs line was made it was a capital paying line. Then they made the Glenties line. As soon as that line was

made from Glasheen to Stranorlar it destroyed the Kilbegh line. Then, contrary to the protests of the people who lived in the county; and, contrary to the views of Lord Leamington and the grand jury and public bodies of Donegal, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Gerald Balfour insisted on making this Hantsport railway system. A large part of the country through which it runs is simply bog, and did not touch the other roads that everybody except Mr. Robertson recommended. The result is, they destroyed the Glasheen line. As, if the Irish authority could not manage better than the Imperial Government, as far as Irish railways are concerned, the Irish authority would be in a bad way.

30126. It is better to keep the Imperial Government as far out of it as possible?—Yes.

30127. Your county needs several branches, like almost every other county?—There is need for a branch railway especially through that very congested district I have referred to, and if the district was developed I believe that that branch would pay, because it would pass through a number of rather flourishing villages—Fislandsbridge, Gortin, etc. I know very well the inconvenience that the people suffer from.

30128. The existing lines only skirt a vast district, the interior of which is not served?—Exactly. The interior is not served at all.

30129. Take all the branches needed in Ireland together and they represent a very considerable capital?—I should think they would.

30130. What do you say to the prospect of the branches being provided either by private capital by the Treasury, or by local contributions?—I am afraid that the local contributions would not be very extensive.

30131. Transit is not a local question?—My idea about the British Government as regards this capital is, this country has been grossly handicapped in the past by the British Government. Everybody acknowledges that.

30132. Even the British Government itself?—It owes an immense debt that it can hardly repay to Ireland. Everybody who reads history will acknowledge this. Therefore, if they devote Imperial money to helping in the development of Ireland, it will be only giving back to the country a little of what has been taken away.

30133. So high an authority as the late Mr. Childers held that the over-taxation of Ireland made a conclusion as far such a subvention to this country as would allow the roads and taxes to be reduced by one-half?—Yes. I don't mean to say that an individual in this country is overtaxed more than in England. That is not the point. But a distinct bargain was made with this country. That bargain has been broken. To my mind, Ireland as a country has a strong claim against the English Government to help without making us beggars. In any case it has a strong claim to be helped in every way that the Government can help it legitimately towards development.

30134. On the question of branches, transit, considering its effect on trade and the whole life of the community, is not a question of private capital, but is a public question?—Yes.

30135. Is not the country as a whole interested in the development of transit, in every part of it?—Of course it is.

30136. Would you say that the best prospect of getting this Irish railway system adequately developed would be to treat the transit question as a public question, and to have a central authority who would use the public resources for the provision of needed branches without laying a burden upon any particular district?—Certainly. That is my idea. Of course, by State purchase there would be an enormous amount of saving. There are 300 or 350 directors in this country, of the various lines. I suppose they are paid something and also have travelling facilities over their lines. That little Claghier Valley tramway has fifteen directors, five more than the London and North Western, and they have got free passes over that line and over the Great Northern line.

30137. Looking at the question as a whole; looking at the heads of expenditure, and considering that there are seventeen independent lines, would you be inclined to accept the authority of the late Sir George

Finlay, that there might be a saving of 20 per cent. by united working?—I should think there would be a considerable saving. It would be only a guess to say the amount, but I should imagine it would be at least 15 or 20 per cent.

30138. Reaching up to towards half a million?—I think it would be very considerable indeed.

30139. As we are on that question I would like to ascertain whether you think the saving due to public credit, whether by Treasury loan or Irish stock, added to the saving by united working, would not be sufficient to enable that body to give reductions in rates and fares up to the level of their resources without involving any public risk?—I don't see the smallest public risk. I quite agree with what you say.

30140. You are not a commercial man, but you are a student of public questions, and, as regards one branch of commerce, you are able to give direct evidence—the manufacture of shirts?—Yes.

30141. Do you find, occasionally, that the rate of transit is such that you really cannot sell shirts in England to advantage?—The town of Omagh is greatly handicapped in every case by excessive rates. Of course, the railway company, for reasons of their own, I suppose, have to do it, but it seems very hard that people living in the town of Omagh have to pay very much higher rates than people living, say, in Sligo or Derry, which is a longer distance from Dublin or from Belfast.

30142. Does the system of rates hinder you from selling not only in England but also from selling in other parts of Ireland?—I cannot say that. Our trade is chiefly with England, and look.

30143. We have had evidence that the rates in Ireland are prohibitive of selling in one part of Ireland articles such as those made in another part of Ireland?—The sale of that article is grossly handicapped, which is practically all I know of the rates question.

30144. I would like to ask you, as a student of public affairs, whether you are aware of the efforts that have been made by Ireland from time to time to work this Irish railway system according to public needs?—Yes; I know that.

30145. Forty years ago Irish members and Irish peers appealed to Parliament to make these railways public property, and undertook that Ireland would accept responsibility?—Yes.

30146. Do you think that should have been granted?—Yes, I am sure it should.

30147. Since that time the railway system has continued, depopulation has gone on, foreign competition has increased, Irish manufactures have not developed, and the state of the country has gone from bad to worse?—That is so.

30148. Do you say now that the time has come when this question should be carefully reconsidered, with the sincere desire and resolution to solve it?—The time should have come long ago. It is rather late now, but there should be no further delay in the matter.

30149. There should be no toying with the question?—There should be no toying with the question.

30150. A policy of subsidies has been recommended, a policy of paying the railway companies, allowing the railway companies to continue as they are, and paying them for reductions by subsidies from the public revenue. I ask you, as a public man, first, would these subsidies not have to come out of the balance of Irish revenue contributed to the Exchequer after payment of existing charges on it?—From all the experience in the past I should think that is where the payments would come from.

30151. There is no other way?—I think the Irish public would have to pay the subsidies in the end themselves.

30152. And it would have to come out of the Irish taxes?—Yes.

30153. Upon that balance of Irish revenue, are there not, at present, a great many important competing claims?—There are, of course, a great many indeed.

30154. If we were to start this question by saying we ask for a charge to be laid on the public revenue would that be a good way of inflicting reform?—I don't think it would.

30155. Would it not be much better to make a positive effort to deal with the question by unifying the system and applying these two savings of which you have spoken to reduction of rates and fares, and

Oct. 17, 1905.

Dr. Edward Thompson, Omagh.

Utilisation of the Irish railways would surely result in considerable savings.

Complaint that the trade of Omagh is handicapped by excessive rates.

The proposition to have the Irish railway system transferred to public control made by Irish Members of Parliament forty years ago.

The proposal to continue the existing companies and grant subsidies to enable reductions in rates expected is.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Dr Edward
Thompson,
Cough.

The policy
of abolition
of the rail-
ways and
public control
and the
application of
stringent
control
to save and
there
reductions
advised.

Subsidies to
existing
companies to
secure reduc-
tion in rates
condemned.

The constitu-
tion of a
suitable
governing
body of a
State-owned
system.

Unsuitability
of a British
department
to adminis-
ter the
Irish railways.

Disapproval
of the propos-
al to further
consolidate
the Irish
railways and
have the
system of
consolidating
unmanaged.

proceeding experimentally without any charge upon them?—That is my strong opinion.

30156. What would be the true policy?—That would be the true policy.

30157. Would it be practicable really if the rail-ways were paid by subsidies for reductions in their rates, to ascertain in any satisfactory way whether the value was given?—I don't think it would. It might give rise to lots of irregularities of various sorts and kinds.

30158. Looking to the vast complication and intricacy of railway business, could anybody, approaching it from the outside, ever say whether the service given was equal to the subsidy?—I don't see how they possibly could.

30159. If the action subsidised traffic the traffic subsidised would be that most needing development?—Yes.

30170. Would it be a good thing to kill the interest of the railway companies in the development of that traffic?—I don't think it would.

30171. It would be much easier for them to take a cheque for the subsidy than to develop the traffic?—Yes. There might be some means by which the State could intervene to see that the subsidy was properly expended, but I don't believe in subsidies.

30172. If the subsidised traffic developed, but not to the full extent of the subsidy, and the subsidy was withdrawn, the railway company would be in a worse position than before?—Yes.

30173. It would be to their interest not to develop traffic, but rather to get the subsidies?—Yes.

30174. That would be a most dangerous and evil policy?—Yes. The only way I see of dealing with Irish railways, and I have thought a great deal about it, is by State purchase, and then to have them governed by an Irish Board, partly of experts and partly of representatives of the people.

30175. Would you have any objection to the representative body being the prevailing element at that Board?—There was some talk not long ago about a Council to govern this country. Of course I consider there is more than a Council required to govern and develop this country, but in the absence of the other, a proper Council would be a great advantage to this country, and that great use could be made of the County Councils and the grand juries without talking of direct representation in the formation of such a Council. If direct representation was not granted a Council could be formed of representatives from the County Councils and the grand juries, and I believe you would have an excellent body sitting in Dublin capable of managing the affairs of this country.

30176. And governing through a Board of railway experts?—Yes.

30177. You know that by the operation of the import rates into England the traffic as food has been, to a great extent, appropriated and seized by foreign competition?—Yes.

30178. A traffic, which owing to its natural position, ought really to belong to Ireland?—Yes.

30179. If Ireland could obtain a substantial part of the increase would not it make this country relatively prosperous?—Yes; it would be a great help.

30180. On the other hand, import rates into Ireland on manufactured goods have hamstrung the Irish manufacturer. He finds himself unable, owing to high inland rates, to dispose of his goods in competition with the importer?—So I believe.

30181. That being the state of the case would it be anything short of absurd to commit this Irish transit question, and the administration of it, to a British department controlled from London, and responsible to no one in this country?—I would not agree with any proposal of the sort.

30182. You would prefer the present system, had as it is?—I would. I don't believe that the Midland company's coming to Ireland has done anything for it.

30183. It is proposed to amalgamate the railways into four systems, or one system, and leave them private property. Would there be any sense (while changing the system) in leaving the rates and fares as they are and leaving it to the companies to say, at their good pleasure, whether the increased profit due to concentrated working was to be used in reduction of rates and fares, or in adding to the dividends?—I think it would make confusion worse confounded, and I would have nothing to do with it.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Fox.

30184. I was rather surprised to hear you say that the Bertrypore Extension has not been of material benefit to the country which it serves?—I don't say that, but if the line had been made in a different direction it would have been much more beneficial. You have been up there inspecting it.

30185. I am sorry to say I have not had that advantage?—It is nearly all running through boggy country.

30186. At the same time the information which we have had, and which Mr. McFarland has admitted, goes to show that the traffic on that Bertrypore Extension has increased beyond all anticipation, and that in fact it is the most paying section of the whole system?—Yes, but it has depleted the Glenties line.

30187. You think there was not room for the two?—I think the line was not run in the proper direction. It should have gone through an important part of the country, that is, through Milford, and on that way to Dunfinghy. Dunfinghy is the most important town on the line, and the line does not run within four or five miles of it. It skirts it. It does not go into it. Dunfinghy is a place where a great number of people from Derry and Letterkenny and other places go to the seaside. It is a favourite tourist route. This line simply goes peckishly through a bog.

30188. Still, I don't quite see, even if the line had gone four miles further north, as you suggest, how that would at the same time deplete and take away the advantage of the Glenties line?—I don't know personally, but I have been told by the manager of the line that that is so.

30189. With regard to the management of the whole of that system, we have had a great deal of evidence, and I don't propose to follow it up except by asking that. The contention of the Board of Works has been that the concern is grossly mismanaged by the Lough Swilly Company. Against that contention the Lough Swilly people say that there were such serious departures from the original specifications and contracts as to involve the Lough Swilly Company in a great deal of loss. The line, according to them, has been badly constructed, had work, bad materials, and so on. Can you say, from your knowledge, which of these versions is correct?—As far as the line is concerned I cannot say much about it except that I am constantly skirting along it with a motor car, and viewing the general construction of the line it seems to be well constructed. The line from Letterkenny to the junction is outside of this high standard. It is a danger to the public. They don't spend a penny more on it. The rails are of the lightest possible description. They pay no attention to the regulations of the Board of Trade.

30190. That is between Letterkenny and Tebbin junction?—Yes.

30191. I was not referring to that, but to the Bertrypore Extension. The contention of the Lough Swilly people is that owing to departure from the original contract and specifications that extension was so badly constructed as to involve them in constant outlay to try to work it at all?—I don't believe it at all. I think the line is fairly well constructed, and is under bad management. I have constantly complained to the Board of Trade about that line and its inconveniences. I have experienced myself no end of breakdowns, stuck in a bog for hours, with no chance of catching trains. How the Derry people put up with the inconvenience of the line so long, and so patiently, I don't know.

30192. You are aware that, some few years ago, the County Council of Donegal, and I think of Derry also, advocated coming to terms with the Board of Works, who were in possession of the property, to make some little payment, and to make over the whole system to the Lough Swilly Company. Subsequently they receded from that position?—Yes.

30193. You think, in receding from that position, they acted wisely?—Yes.

30194. It would not be to the benefit of that community generally that that intervening section should be taken over by the Lough Swilly people?—No. I think the Government, if they knew, as they should have known, from the frequent complaints, and from the newspaper correspondence, and from every source of careful inquiry, that if they handed over these railways to an incompetent company, such as this

proprietary railway is, it would be a sure way not to have those branch lines properly developed; it would follow, as a natural course, that from the beginning to the finish of the whole business they never would have contracted such a bargain as they did with the Lough Swilly Railway Company.

30195. At any rate, without going into that question, you would be opposed, in the interests of the public generally, to any further powers being given to the Lough Swilly Company?—Certainly. I think they should be all taken from them if it can be done.

30196. I gather that the effect of the Strabane and Convey extension, shortly to be completed, will probably be to solve this difficulty?—It will greatly solve the difficulty, because nobody will travel over the old company's route unless compelled to do so.

30197. At the same time, a point which came before us on behalf of the guaranteeing area responsible for dividends on the Letterkenny branch, was that, though they opposed extension from Strabane and Convey, Mr. Wyndham, who was then Chief Secretary, advocated it so far as to say that, though the railwaying area of Letterkenny would suffer, yet, in the general interests of the whole of the community, he thought the extension should be made. I would like to know whether you think such an argument, which, no doubt, carried great weight with the House of Commons in the passing of the Bill, does not constitute an argument in favour of some relief being given to that guaranteeing area?—I think it certainly does, because that extension of railway was made contrary to the wishes of the people, firstly, by the British Government, and by Mr. Gerald Balfour, against the advice of Lord Leitrim and every person who knew the locality and knew the wants of the people.

30198. Even this Strabane extension, which is made against their wish, will have the effect of drawing off traffic now going over the Letterkenny branch to Strabane?—It will.

30199. It will take away any possibility of a reduction in the liability which the Letterkenny people have to pay?—Yes.

30200. In your opinion, you think that constitutes a fair argument for the Treasury giving them some relief?—I think so.

30201. I see you advocate a light railway from Strabane or from Newtownstewart to Cookstown?—Yes.

30202. As you perhaps know, I am acquainted with that district. I live up there for a certain portion of the year. Assuming you put the expense down at £8,000 or £4,000 a mile, such a line, about 35 miles long, would cost about £150,000. To pay 3 per cent. on such a sum would involve a net revenue of, say, £8,000 a year. Do you think it is possible, in such a district as that, to have such a surplus of receipts over working expenses as to pay even the low rate of interest I have mentioned?—Of course we all know that part of the district is extremely poor.

30203. Very poor?—Yes. At the same time it is very thickly populated; a large number of people live in it, and I think it is wonderful what a railway will sometimes do. Nobody would have imagined for a moment that the Burtonport line would have paid; yet it does pay. Of course it has the sea fisheries.

30204. It has the fisheries and several industries; but in this particular district there is no industry except the agricultural one, and that is a very small one?—Yes; but there might be a development of industries.

30205. But do you think it could possibly pay?—I don't think it would be a paying line; but it would tend to make the people richer.

30206. Do you think the people in that district, and the Tyrone County Council, speaking on behalf of the ratepayers of each district, would be prepared to guarantee anything?—I think, if there was some help assured, the County Council would be prepared to guarantee a portion, and I am sure the people themselves would gladly submit to pay a tax to have the railway.

30207. We have had evidence from all parts of the country, even where the liability of various districts has been reduced by one-half, that the people grumble about the rate?—They grumble.

30208. These are grumbles that we need not attend to?—I think the advantages would be so great as to more than repay any little tax put on them.

30209. With regard to the general question, you are aware that, for the last thirty or forty years,

proposals for State purchase or amalgamation have been frequently before the public?—Constantly.

30210. In 1873 the Government of the day expressed itself ready to give financial aid to the Irish railway companies provided amalgamation took place?—Yes.

30211. In 1881 or 1882 the House of Commons was again in favour of the amalgamation of Irish railways by every private means in their power, and even, if necessary, by Parliamentary action; and in 1888 the Allport Commission were also in favour of greater centralisation of control, accompanied by very material reductions in the rates?—Yes.

30212. So, looking back on the history of railways for the last thirty years, every inquiry that has been held, and any motion that has been brought before Parliament, whether they advocated State Purchase or not have all been in favour of amalgamation, and all consider that, in the interests of this country, considerable reductions of rates and fares were very desirable?—Certainly.

30213. Is there any reason in the present day why that opinion should be modified?—I don't think there is any reason. There is rather an increased reason why the State should come to the help of the Irish railways, and I don't see any difficulty in carrying it out, even in the present depressed condition of the money market, by purchasing up the Irish railways.

30214. With reference to the financial part of the transaction allusion has been made several times to the Financial Relations Commission, and Mr. Sexton called your attention to the view expressed by Mr. Childers. I demand you are aware that he drew up a draft report before his death?—Yes.

30215. Is that draft report, in taking into account the excessive revenue which this country contributed and which he put down at £24 millions, and in considering in what way restitution or compensation should be made to this country, he said that of the three alternative courses by means of which practical relief could be given the one which most commended itself to his mind as being the most likely to advance the prosperity of the country was the consolidation of the railways, and the grant of money to assist them. I think he went so far as to say that putting aside any claim we might have, as to which there is a difference of opinion, it would be good policy on the part of Great Britain to give such an annual sum of money to this country as would develop its industries and resources?—I think, as I said before, in view of the past history of the country, although I think the people must take in hand more the future development of the country, yet they should be helped to a certain extent. If I wanted to develop my production I would put my whole skill and energy into it, and I think the people should not be helped too much, but should be brought to develop all their latent powers. It is not good to help them beyond a certain point, and the only reason I would advocate the British Government helping Ireland in the way I have mentioned is simply because I believe that Great Britain owes Ireland an immense sum of money, and therefore there is no objection to taking any we get; but if the individual is helped too much his energies are depressed more or less.

30216. If, Sexton—There is no danger of that kind of depression in this case?—Not much in this country; still, at the same time, you have to be careful, I think.

30217. Colonel Hutchinson. Past—Apart from any claim we might have, would it not be good policy on the part of Great Britain to do anything to materially increase the prosperity and the purchasing capacity of Ireland?—I think the greatest debt any British statesman can do is to make Ireland friendly and to make her prosperous; and if you wish to help the Emperor you can do nothing better than make Ireland happy and contented.

30218. And to put the people in a better position to pay for commodities which they are obliged to take from England?—Yes.

30219. And any assistance which England might be prepared to give in the way of helping us to carry out this transaction of taking over the railways might lead to such development as, after a time, would recompense itself?—Yes. I have every reason to believe that.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Dr. Edward Thompson, Omagh.

The trend of public opinion is in favour of centralisation of the railways of Ireland and a reduction in the charges for railway rates.

Opinions of the Government and the House of Commons on purchase and amalgamation of Irish railways since 1873.

Ireland's claim for financial assistance from Great Britain for the development of the country.

English financial assistance in purchasing the Irish railways would ultimately benefit the Irish country.

On 15, 1907.

Dr. Edward
Thompson,
Gough.

Any scheme
of subsidising
the Irish
railways from
public funds
apart from
State
purchase dis-
approved.

The capability
of an
elected Irish
body to
satisfactorily
control the
railways

30230. I gather you are opposed to subsidies—I don't agree with subsidies.

30231. I think Mr. Childers contemplated a reduction of the rates by one-half. That might involve some loss to the railway companies, and that loss would be guaranteed for a certain time—I don't think, if you bought up the Irish railways, that the shareholders should suffer any loss.

30232. Though you are opposed to subsidies and advances such as you say would risk undermining the enterprise and the commercial interests of the management, you would not be opposed to the State assisting, if necessary, in buying up the fixed charges on the Irish railways, which, of course, it could do upon favourable terms, and in that way assisting any such body as might be entrusted with the administration in carrying through the transaction?—Yes.

30233. I gather from your remarks you would have had no hesitation in entrusting the control of the purchased system of railways to such a body as the Government recently proposed to establish—the Irish Council?—The Irish Councils are better than the English Councils, and there is no reason why, as they do them very well, the Central Irish Council would not do the same.

30234. I don't want to get into politics, but I gather that, in your opinion, the proposed Council would have been a great benefit, and would have given some control over this matter?—I don't approve of the last Council Bill of the Government.

30235. You don't think half a loaf is better than no loaf?—I do; but that Bill would have made a loaf of the Lord Lieutenant.

30236. But, talking of the general principle?—The general principle, I approve of. If you don't get Home Rule, a Council would be better than nothing.

30237. *Chairman*.—We had better steer clear of political considerations.

30238. *Colonel Hutchinson Psc*.—Any such body, or a similar body by which satisfactory control could be established?—I think so.

30239. Would you be prepared to hand over the administration of Irish railways to the General Council of Irish County Councils?—I would not. I don't think that that is a satisfactory body, as at present constituted. My idea is it should be composed of experts, with popular representatives upon it, so that you would have the experts managing the expert part of the business, and the public brought into communication with the expert members by the agency of the representatives of the County Councils and the grand juries.

30240. The idea of a good many witnesses who appeared before us was that the railways should be administered by a Board of the best railway experts, but that they should be under the control of, and responsible to, the General Council. I should like to know what your idea is upon that?—There are a number of the counties not represented on the Council.

30241. *Chairman*.—I think the doctor has fully explained what he means. There should be experts to manage the railways, and an Irish authority to control them.

30242. *Colonel Hutchinson Psc*.—That is the point I wished to get from him. We have got no such body except the General Council?—You could create it through representatives from the County Councils and Grand Juries.

30243. *Mp. Norton*.—If there was no other body created?—Yes; if there was not.

30244. *Colonel Hutchinson Psc*.—Fearing any other body, would you be prepared to give it to a railway Board, assuming that the administration would be in the hands of a railway Board of experts?—Selected by representatives of the people, that is my idea; a small Board.

Examined by Lord PRIMER

30245. You say that every person admits that the English Government owe us something which might in part be utilised in the making of new railways, or the extension of existing ones. Do you mean every person in Ireland, or every person in England also?—Every person in England and Scotland should admit it.

30246. If every person admits it, why are not those works done? You were a member of Parliament. Did every person in Parliament admit it?—I am afraid.

30247. I think, as regards the evidence on the minutes it is this, that every person admits that the British Government owe us something?—They should admit it. You have a British Government in power, appointing a strong financial relations Commission.

30248. *Mp. Sexton*.—The best men they had?—Yes; composed of thirteen or fourteen experts, the greatest and soundest authorities in the country. They investigated the matter, take evidence, and go thoroughly into the whole question, and report with only one exception, that undoubtedly this country is over-taxed to the extent of 2½ millions.

30249. There was no exception on that point?—Very good. If that public Commission, appointed by the British Government, has so reported, surely every intelligent man in England and Scotland should know we have got a good case. If they don't know it I am sorry for them.

30250. *Lord Primer*.—I thought you meant to convey that every person in Ireland believed that there was a balance in favour of Ireland, but certainly every person in England does not, or else what you suggest by way of retribution would be done?—I don't know that. Everybody in England may believe that a great many things should be done, and at the same time the Government won't do it. Everybody in this country believes that the report of the Vocational Commission on Workhouses in Ireland pointed out the reforms that were needed, and though we have got a powerful Liberal Government in office at the present time, who acknowledges that this is so, and that that Commission has correctly reported, yet it has done nothing, and I am afraid that perhaps it may do the same about the Railway Commission.

30251. You think that everybody should concur in the conclusions of the report?—Every intelligent man who reads and studies the papers should know that this Commission, appointed by the British Government, has reported that England is indebted to this country in a huge sum of money, and consequently it is acting upon that I say that everybody admits that this money is due.

30252. You made a statement also as regards the Northern Counties Railway to the effect that it has gone back since it was taken over by the Midland Railway Company of England?—In my opinion it has gone back.

30253. You seem to be strongly of that opinion?—Yes; I gave my impressions as the result of travelling on the line.

30254. Has it increased the fares?—No; it has not increased the fares, but it has done nothing to develop the line, so far as I know. It has left it to this Northern Counties Committee, and what is the result? The Northern Counties Committee have full control and management of the line, and they take the greatest possible trouble, but they have not so met their shareholders now. They have no incentive to better themselves about it.

30255. If they have not to meet the shareholders, does that make any difference to the shareholders if they get the accommodation of extra trains, and if the line is really improved?—They do not do it. The carriages are better. I do not know myself, because, of course, I only travel on the line occasionally. I run down to Portlaoise and Coleraine, and places like that, and my general impression of the line is that instead of having improved under the Midland Railway management, it has distinctly gone back.

30256. Then, you do not consider that it is an advantage to Ireland that the Midland Railway Company, a very large company, invest money in Ireland and show confidence in the country?—No; I do not see the advantage.

30257. You do not think their action brought any money into Ireland?—I do not think it brought a penny into Ireland. The Midland Railway and the Great Northern Railway pool the business, and they can manage the thing between themselves, and stop competition, and I say it does not help the public at all.

30258. You seem to be very strong in your opinion; but, except the dirty carriages, you have no other instance of degeneration?—And that the time-keeping of the railway is not as good as it used to be. And people going through Portlaoise are very much inconvenienced.

30259. You speak of this 10 o'clock train from Belfast to Portlaoise?—Yes.

Or as an
alternative a
Railway
Board
selected by
the repre-
sentatives of
the people.

The money
due to
Ireland in
respect of
over-taxation

30248. We communicated with Colonel Plevin, and Colonel Plevin on that occasion said that if the Post Office would agree to put back the train he had no objection to put it back. And I understood, from conversation I had at the Post Office, that the Post Office is quite willing to alter the train to suit the travelling public, provided it does not interfere with the delivery of the mails. I think that question of yours refers to the train that leaves Belfast at 10 o'clock, and has to wait at Portadown three quarters of an hour. I cannot see that the Post Office, if they are assured by the Great Northern Railway, that the putting back of this train would not interfere with the work of the Post Office, would have any objection whatsoever to it.

Colonel Plevin.—I think you are confusing two things. I think your inquiry had reference to the time of the train from Dublin, which was advocated by some witnesses. Our inquiry had reference entirely—the recent one—to the 10 o'clock train from Belfast, which runs as far as Portadown, and waits there—speaking of the book—for at least an hour.

Lord Fricke.—Yes, and the impression on my mind, from the conversation I had at the Post Office, and the way the Post Office wrote to me several times since, is that they would be quite willing to alter the train to suit the convenience of the public if the railway company could only put it clearly to them what they wanted, and that it would not interfere with the work of the Post Office.

Colonel Plevin.—I should be glad to give you a copy of the correspondence.

30250. Chairman.—You see the Post Office have always a reservation. They say, "If it will not interfere with our post office work" &c.—(Witness).—I have spoken to Colonel Plevin, and he said he was anxious to consider any complaint that was made, and he did not take notice of this matter.

Lord Fricke.—I think, myself, that this train could be altered for the convenience of people at Portadown as well as others.

Colonel Plevin.—No doubt it would be a public advantage, instead of leaving at 10 to leave half an hour later.

30251. Lord Fricke.—Then, the impression on my mind is that the Post Office would agree to it. That is my impression from the conversation. Now, may I ask you one question? You stated that the shirts cost 7s a ton more from Omagh?—8s 6d a ton.

30252. 8s 6d a ton is a very small fraction of a farthing, is it not, per shirt?—Yes.

30253. Now, you have, in Omagh, very much greater savings from not having nearly so much taxation in Omagh as you have in Derry?—Yes.

30254. And cheaper labour than in Derry?—Not much cheaper labour.

30255. But something cheaper?—Practically just the same.

30256. And therefore the friction of a farthing per shirt cannot surely make much difference?—But what about the 5s difference in costs for driving your engines? An interior town, a town like Omagh, is greatly handicapped by the increased cost of coal as compared with Derry. You must consider the difference caused by the increased price of coal, and then, if you increase the cost of shirts you will find that our little shirt factories, which are handicapped in Omagh, are crushed out.

30257. Mr. Serles.—It is not a question of a farthing a shirt, but one of the effects of the raising rates on wholesale purchasers, and on the trade as a whole.

30258. And also the effect on the trader's budget, at the end of the year; not how much per shirt?—Certainly.

30259. Chairman.—Now, about this extension to Portadown. Do you seriously say that there was opposition on the part of some of the residents in the county to the scheme projected by Mr. Robertson?—Well, you will get opposition to almost any project; but the great preponderance of public opinion was what I tell you, and the Grand Jury were almost unanimous in recommending, headed by Lord Leitrim, the late Lord Leitrim, who was a most active man, and had great influence in the place, and took the greatest possible interest in the development of his own county.

30260. Was that opinion publicly expressed?—It was, before the Grand Jury. The whole thing was debated, and every effort was made to get this line put in this direction, and Mr. Robertson—that was Gerald Robertson—sent down Mr. Robertson, and notwithstanding every effort of the people to change his determination, he obstinately insisted that that line should be made, and he also said, "If you do not have that line you will have nothing." Against the almost unanimously expressed opinion of the people this was picketfenced on them.

30261. Lord Fricke.—But it was all discussed and argued before the Privy Council?—It was before the Grand Jury. That was the local representative authority at that time. Of course the people would know a great deal more about it than the Privy Council. I would not give much for the opinion of the Privy Council against the opinion which had a knowledge of the county.

30262. Chairman.—Is there any other point?—I want to bring under your notice the great inconvenience to the public of the light railways persistently ignoring the regulations of the Board of Trade about automatic brakes. There is not one of these lines, the Letterkenny Railway, the Bortoport Line, or the Glenties Line, or the Killybegs Line that makes use of the automatic brake; and the result is that it has encouraged them, to the great inconvenience of the public, to run mixed trains. The public are shunted about, and knocked about, in the most extraordinary way on these lines, and the consequence is that more than half of them are goods trains, and they run no other passenger trains. If I want to go to Killybegs it takes me five hours to get there from Omagh.

30263. Lord Fricke.—How long would it take in a motor?—About half the time. I never think of using the railway. I always use the motor. I mean to place on this line.

30264. Mr. Serles.—How far is it?—It is about fifty or sixty miles.

30265. Colonel Hutchinson. Port-Fraser Strathmore?—No, from Omagh. And it consequently kills the development of Killybegs, which is a beautiful place, so far as seaside people going to it. They would not dream of going a journey like that, because of the inconvenience and shunting and knocking about that they experience. They never use the brakes on this Lough Swilly Line, although I have over and over again drawn the attention of the Board of Trade to the fact, and to the extreme danger to the public, of a line with steep gradients, without any brakes.

30266. Chairman.—They have brakes?—They have brakes, but they do not use them. They need 5s a string of eight or nine wagons without any brake whatever behind them. Now they have the guards' van, but they have no automatic brake.

30267. That is compulsory upon them, with mixed trains?—It would be very convenient if this line could be made to run passenger trains.

Mr. Taffee.—Might I make one observation on behalf of the Northern Counties Committee, as it has been said that nothing is being done for the public convenience? Just one fact I should like to mention. They run now 200,000 more train miles in the year than they did before the acquisition by the Midland. That must represent a very great convenience to the public.

30268. Chairman.—That must represent additional trains.

Mr. Taffee.—Additional trains, and they are largely passenger trains. Then there are more trains, and, as to goods, they use longer trains by the employment of heavier engines. They have got six more engines and fifty more wagoes.

30269. Chairman.—Dr. Thompson frankly told us he was not thoroughly acquainted with the line. He merely gave his opinion from observation in travelling along the line?—(Witness).—That is all; from what struck me.

30270. Lord Fricke.—About the carriages?—Yes; that they were extremely dirty.

30271. Chairman.—You do not see any improvement since the acquisition of the line?—I see none at all. And I may mention that the station at Coleraine and other places are made public promenades. The general public surrounded the stations on Sunday evenings especially, to the great inconvenience of passengers going to or from

Oct. 17, 1907.

Dr. Edward Thompson, Omagh.

The route chosen for the Bortoport Railway alleged to have been adapted against the opinion of the county.

The inconveniences to the public occasioned by mixed trains without the carriages, accessible to the public on light railways as designed.

The Lough Swilly Line is instances as involving extreme danger to the public in this respect.

Explanation on behalf of the Northern Counties Committee as to increased train mileage since the acquisition of the line by the Midland Company.

On 17, 1905
Dr Edward
Thompson,
Carrick.

the line. They simply walk up and down, looking into the windows, and it is extremely inconvenient.
—*Lord Purvis*.—Perhaps they are seeing their sweet hearts off.

30272. *Chairman*.—They make it a church parade! —They make it a church parade, and cause much annoyance.

Mr T B
Faulk,
Town Clerk,
Strabane.

Mr T B FAULK, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30273. Mr Faulk, you are Town Clerk of Strabane? —Yes.

30274. And you appear on behalf of the Strabane Mercantile Association?—Yes, sir.

30275. Well, I suppose that Association comprises the principal trades in the place?—It embodies the leading merchants of the town.

30276. And tradesmen?—And tradesmen.—Yes.

30277. Of course, as town clerk, you have, I suppose, practical knowledge of the trade of the town?—Well, prior to my appointment as town clerk, I was commercially engaged for over twenty years in one firm, which is the largest firm in the timber and slate and milling and grain trade.

30278. How long have you been town clerk?—Seven years from last July.

30279. And before that you had experience of the business of the town?—Yes, sir.

30280. And before that I think you had a business experience of railways?—Oh, no; but my father had a connection with the Strabane Canal Company, and I assisted in the office, and had a slight connection with the traffic business.

30281. No direct connection?—No, sir.

30282. Now, the next subject that you refer to I don't think I need go into, because it is a question of a dispute with a canal company, and we are not requiring into canal companies, we are only dealing with the railways?—Will you permit me to say that Strabane occupies a very good position by the nature of its geographical situation. We look upon Strabane as a seaport town. It should be treated with the same facilities as Derry, inasmuch as we have a waterway coming within three miles of the town, and we have a canal to it that was made by a grant of the Irish Parliament; and that is a public canal and merchants can use it if they like; and we look upon it as a seaport town, and yet Derry has advantages over it.

30283. You have not a tidal waterway?—We have a tidal waterway on the river.

30284. Is it all dry at low water?—No, there is a reasonable depth of water, and, in my own recollection, lighters with coal loaded up to Lifford. Thirty-five ton steamers traded past Strabane.

30285. From where?—From Derry, past Strabane town, and up to Lifford and Cuskiein, and we feel that Strabane ought not to be treated so; and that it is rather owing to its geographical position, and also to the facilities that were given it, that Derry should not get exceptional advantages as against Strabane.

30286. At any rate, no sea-going vessels could get up to Strabane?—Yes, sir, they could. I have seen a steamer in the canal basin loaded with eighty tons of timber for a private firm in which I was employed, as a hulk—a large timber merchant; he had large chemical works and saw-mills that gave employment at the time, and he loaded the steamer with goods in the canal basin, and the steamer was of sufficient size to enable it to pass through the lock gates, and sufficiently deep to be able to go over the sill of the lock, and that vessel went right through to Glasgow, and came back with a cargo of coal.

30287. What was the tonnage of that vessel?—Eighty or ninety tons.

30288. You do not call that a sea-going steamer?—Oh, no, I know; but it would do for coasting trade.

30289. There is a lock on the canal connecting the waterway that goes from Londonderry to Strabane?—Two locks.

30290. What is the width of the Lock?—Twenty-four feet about.

30291. What is the depth of water on the sill?—We applied to the Board of Trade to look after this canal, and they say they have no power to compel attention to these things, and my idea would be that canals should be looked after as well as railways.

30292. *Lord Purvis*.—What is the depth of the water?—It is six feet!—As a rule it is a depth of five feet six inches to six feet.

30293. Six feet, that is the maximum?—We brought it before the Commissioners at Belfast, and, I am sorry to say, the Commissioners did not get an opportunity of coming to visit it.

30294. *Chairman*.—To whom does the canal belong?—It is public property. That is one of the difficulties raised by the Duke of Abercorn, who was owner and lessee of the land through which the canal is made. In the year 1838, when it was necessary for the Canal Companies to lodge a schedule of the rates and tolls and matters of that kind, the Board of Trade, not having received a schedule from this company, were entitled to make out a schedule of rates which they considered reasonable, and the Duke of Abercorn, looking on himself as the private owner of the canal, raised a question as to the right of the Board of Trade to insist on the lodgment of a schedule, inasmuch as it was not a canal created by any public funds, and the result was that he lodged an appeal against the schedule, and the merchants of the town at the eleventh hour, I may say, got aware to the necessity of the case, and they appeared in support of the Board of Trade, with the result that, at Dublin, the schedule was confirmed in a provisional order.

30295. That was Lord Balfour's Committee?—Yes, sir, and the Duke of Abercorn appealed against that, and we had to struggle hard, at very considerable expense, and we had to appear before the Committee of the Lords and Commons, of which the chairman was the Duke of Richmond, and not only did we succeed in maintaining our position against the private, or disputed private ownership of the Duke, but we satisfied that Committee that the canal was a public canal, and that the public had a right to trade over it on the payment of sixpence per ton. The Canal Company endeavoured to get a shifting a ton schedule, and we beat them on that too.

30296. Who works the canal now?—This gentleman whose character you heard described by Dr. Thompson. Mr. John McFarlane at present owns the canal, and he arrived at it in this way.

30297. I think that is rather beyond our province?—Well, the canal is not managed at all, sir; it is mismanaged. It has a history that, if the public had it, they would be surprised at, and I am sure, sir, that you and the rest of the Commission would feel for the unfortunate inhabitants of the North of Ireland if they knew the difficulties under which they labour as regards transit facilities, with plenty of opportunities for them.

30298. Plenty of opportunity of working the canal, but the canal not being utilized?—The canal is not being utilized, and they work partly in collusion with the railway.

30299. *Lord Purvis*.—With the Lough Swilly Railway?—No; with my honorable friend, Colonel Pless.

30300. *Colonel Pless*.—Till this moment I did not know that Mr. McFarlane had anything to do with it.

30301. *Lord Purvis*.—He cannot have anything to do with it, probably?—Will you pardon me on that. Will you permit me to say this, and I am sure Colonel Pless will not attempt to deny it, that it was with James McFarlane the predecessor in title of John McFarlane, that there was a treaty made and concluded between McFarlane and the railway company.

30302. *Mr. Seres*.—If the canal is public property how does Mr. McFarlane control it now, since you defeated the claim of the Duke of Abercorn?—Because he secured a lease for the working of the canal from his grace the Duke.

30303. We thought the Duke was defeated?—So he was; but the canal he had—if you give me a minute I will just explain the history of it.

30304. *Chairman*.—It is beyond the scope of our inquiry?—It is beyond it in one sense, but in another sense it touches it in this way, that I desire to point out to you that that canal has been manipulated by Mr. McFarlane, not by this present John McFarlane, but by the James McFarlane who was the Duke of Abercorn's agent, and he manipulated so as to work

The canal
breaks out
shaded for
Strabane so
far Derry in
the matter of
rates

The former
existing
condition of
the Strabane
Canal and its
present un-
developed
state

Dimensions
of the locks
and navigable
depths of the
water-way

that in collision. There was a company formed, and he became owner of three-fifths of the shares, and his wife owned a fifth, and the attorney of the estate owned a couple of hundred pounds, and the bailiff on the estate was brought in too; and these were the company.

30304. Mr. Town Clerk, if you have any further grievance about this canal you will have to go to the Canal Commission—I am sorry for that.

30305. It is beyond our inquiry?—I know, but we have done our best before the Canal Commission.

30306. Well, you have done your best to get on the notes the grievances under which you labour. You have got them on the notes?—It is not for that, but it was with the hope of getting some redress. I have no personal desire to have anything I say put on the notes.

30307. Lord Purvis.—The point that you speak of is on the notes of the Canal Commission that you have handed over. The whole of this will come before them.

30308. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—Perhaps I can explain this. I was in this report of the Canal Commission that this lease was taken out by the Duke of Abercorn in 1850, for thirty years, and subsequently that lease was practically acquired by Mr. McFarlane. The public have a right to use the canal in payment of a toll of sixpence per ton, though that right has not been exercised very much. But the canal company have a lease for thirty years, of which there are twelve years still to run; and, practically, Mr. McFarlane is the lessee of it.

30309. Lord Purvis.—The whole of that evidence is before the Canal Commission, and we have it. Except that part of it, that the present lessee of the canal, Mr. John McFarlane does not appear in that. It was James McFarlane who was then the agent.

30310. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—Here is the statement in the evidence of the witness—"His interest, I understand, has passed to Mr. John McFarlane for the residue of the lease?"—Yes.

30311. Mr. Scott.—Can you make it clearer why, notwithstanding the existence of this navigable canal and waterway to the sea, Strabane has not done better as to railway rates?—The only reason I can give is that the Derry merchants have less ability to exercise more control or influence on the Directors of the Great Northern Company; thus have more influence on them by reason of larger traffic.

30312. If the canal is navigable, why does not Strabane oblige the railway company to bring down the rates?—Well, we maintained our rights there up to the time the lessee of the canal, Mr. James McFarlane put a bridge across the canal; and that was done to prevent the bringing in of a ship.

30313. Do you say that the navigation of the canal is impeded?—Mr. McFarlane did not care twopence whether it was closed or not if he got £1,000 from the railway.

30314. You have not made it plain?—Why?

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Peck.

30315. Is it because the Harbour Commissioners have neglected their duty in not keeping the river free up to Lifford?—That is part of the reason.

30316. Is the depth of water, instead of six or seven feet, about four feet?—Sometimes.

30317. The impression produced by reading the evidence before the Canal Commission was that the Harbour Commissioners had neglected their duty?—Yes.

30318. Whether that was in collision with the railway company or not does not appear, but at any rate this canal manifestly cannot be utilized to its full extent under present conditions?—It can be utilized to this extent, that there is £20,000 a year of traffic carried over it.

30319. But I think that was brought before the Commission, and, reading the evidence, they gave, for what it was worth, that is the impression it conveyed to my mind, that the want of depth in the water was due to the Harbour Commissioners neglecting their duty. I don't know whether that is so or not, but at any rate your contention is that Strabane should as a sea-port have the benefit of lower rates. Of course, we have heard a good deal about ports, that they get the benefit of lower rates, and that traffic is carried past an intermediate station, to a

distinct station, a port, at a much lower rate than the intermediate station receives, owing to the fact that if it was not carried at that low rate it would go into the port by sea. That is so, is it not?—Yes.

30320. And your contention is that Strabane, occupying, practically speaking, the position of a sea-port, ought to get the same benefit of rates from Dublin, we will say, as at present Derry haul?—Yes, sir. Well, we do not get that, and I would like to give evidence in that regard. We have a merchant in Strabane with £40,000, £50,000, £60,000 a year of breadstuffs. On one occasion he desired to introduce his business into the West of Ireland and into the South of Ireland, and he had arranged with this well-managed Great Northern Railway Company for a special rate to a particular part of the West, and the conditions were that he should load at Derry. Having finished the stuff that he had at Derry he thought it reasonable, if it brought him a benefit, that he might be permitted to load at Strabane, which was nearly fifteen miles nearer railway carriage to Sligo, and yet the railway company refused to permit him to use the breadstuffs to be delivered at Strabane, and insisted on his paying two shillings in addition, and he rebelled against this and fought them as long as he could, and the end of it was that he had to pay it, with the result that the business of breadstuffs deliveries from Strabane to the West was knocked on the head, as he could not succeed. Then, that was as regards breadstuffs. Derry has a preference in one case of from 15s. to 1s. 6d. a ton over the neighbourhood all round in this direction. Derry has an advantage over Strabane to this extent, not as regards imports which possibly as a sea-port, it might be contended was fair, but as regards exports in the rates charged to inland towns, for instance, Omagh.

(Witness loaded in the following list of rates.)

BREADSTUFFS—5 ton lots

Station.	Miles	Strabane	Derry.	Difference.
Reedmore Junction, ..	34	6 6	7 4	8 10
Pettigo, ..	46	7 4	8 4	1 0
Castledowell, ..	73	7 6	8 6	1 0
Belmont, ..	96	7 6	8 6	1 0
Ballinacorney, ..	93	7 6	8 6	1 0
Bundoran, ..	97	7 4	8 4	1 0
Belturbet, ..	86	9 2	9 0	0 10
Delone, ..	76	9 9	9 9	0 3

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. T. B. Peck,
Town Clerk,
Strabane

Unfair treatment of a Strabane trader as regards the rates for bread stuffs to the West of Ireland.

Preferential rates granted to Derry to the injury of other towns

Comparative list of rates for bread stuffs from Derry and from Strabane to eight stations

30321. Chairman.—The traffic originated at Derry? Yes.

30322. Not coming in by the sea?—Not coming in by the sea. For instance, agricultural machines, potatoes and grain and traffic of that sort.

30323. Potatoes?—If you look at the district you will find that Strabane and Derry are parallel practically, and if you take a circle of ten miles or so there are points at which it is immaterial to a farmer whether he delivers at Derry or Strabane, so far as regards the trouble of delivery; but it is very material whether he gets two shillings a ton more for his stuff, and the Derry dealer can afford to give two shillings more a ton for potatoes, for the reason that we are handicapped by the railway to that extent, and we claim that that is a most unreasonable thing, seeing that they have a long distance to carry the goods. Our rate from Strabane for potatoes to Belfast is 7s., and from Derry it is 5s., and the rate to Omagh from Derry is 4s. The rates to Omagh are 4s. from Derry, whilst it is 5s. 6d. to Strabane, fifteen miles less; and then the rate to Maguire's Bridge is 7s. 11d. per ton, and only 8s. 6d. to Derry.

30324. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—What is the distance from Strabane to Derry?—About fifteen miles.

30325. Briefly put, is this what you wish to say, that traffic coming north, that is, anywhere north, to Strabane, should be carried to stations south of that town at the same rates as traffic coming north to

Comparison of the rates for potatoes from Derry and from Strabane to certain stations.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. T. B. Fealy,
Treasurer,
Strabane.Complaint
that the Great
Northern
Company
reduced the
rate for
porter—
Duffin to
Strabane to
meet steamer
competition,
and after
wards raised
it again.Alleged
breach of
faith as to
porter rates
on the part
of the Great
Northern
Company.Ineffective
representations
to the Com-
pany, and
diversion of
the traffic to
the Morecambe
route.Reluctance
of traders to
have their
names men-
tioned in
connection
with evidence
submitted to
the Commis-
sion.Allegation
that rebate
was given
by Great
Northern
Company

Derry is carried to those towns?—Yes. I say that we are entitled to that; but we are handicapped. And I will show that in the case of these gentlemen that I spoke of. We had a coasting steamer to Derry which loaded round to Belfast and Dublin. What we are on now is as regards porter traffic. The railway company ran at rates which were losing rates to themselves to Strabane, simply for the purpose of killing and knocking out the coasting steamer; and the rates used long ago to be 15s., and then they were reduced to 12s.; and then, a little later on, they were 7s. or 7s. 6d., and then they were 5s. 1d., and there is a prevailing opinion that they have subsidized the steamer.

30325 *Lord Pirrie*.—Once they lower their rates they cannot raise them again?—I beg your pardon, they have raised it.

30327. You can go to the Railway Commission?—I can give several instances in which this company have made mistakes.

30328 *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—Give us instances where rates have been fixed at a certain level?—The steamer was carrying porter down from Dublin to Derry at 7s. compared with 9s. to Strabane. They could have brought it on to Strabane for 5s. 6d., and the moment the steamer was off they raised the rate to Strabane to 12s.; and I know as a matter of fact, from one large spirit merchant in Strabane, that the railway company actually agreed with him that, whether the steamer was taken off or not, they would continue the rate of 7s., and when they changed 12s. he said—"Didn't you give us your promise?" and they said it was conditional. Now, what is he going to do?—Sooner than give them the satisfaction of giving them 12s. he ships the porter to Morecambe, and ships it from Morecambe to Derry, and brings it by canal to Strabane; and the cost of all that shipping and the different handlings is only 6d. in excess of the rate charged at present by the railway company.

30329 What time was that?—Inside the past twelve months.

30330 At any rate under a year?—Yes.

30331. The rate from Dublin for porter to Strabane by sea, previously existing, was 7s. 3d.—Yes.

30332. And subsequently, when the competition was knocked off, the railway company charged 12s. 6d. to 12s. or 12s. 6d.

30333 Is that an addition of 20 per cent. when the sea-competition was knocked on the land?—Yes.

30334 And have you made any representation to the railway company protesting against such an increase in the rate?—Well, I think this gentleman, the spirit merchant, actually insisted on them carrying 4 9s. 6d. and they refused to do it. And what did he do?—Sooner than satisfy them he is got to this expense of having the porter shipped to Morecambe.

30335 *Chairman*.—Do you object to give the name of the individual—if you do object, I won't press it?—I would rather not give it. On that particular point we have a terrible difficulty in getting the Northerners to face the issue, that is, some of them. There is a good deal of backdoor business in connection with this company that we cannot put our finger on, and there is a good deal of preferential tariff and backdoor subsidies that we could not get at; and some of those men, when they really give us good information, valuable information of this sort, close our mouths and they are in a quiet way—"Don't introduce me, but I can tell you as a matter of fact such a thing has happened. As a matter of fact there have been lots of rebates. Some of the merchants have got a shilling a ton rebate."

30336. You say you know "as a matter of fact"?—Yes; because I have been told by the merchants.

30337. What is from information received, but you do not know it within your own knowledge. It is important if you can give us direct information?—Well, I have no hesitation in giving you the names of the gentlemen if you consider any word not worthy of belief.

30338. Do not put it in that way?—I am as positive as that I am here that that rebate was given or these men would not have told me.

30339. Unless we have some definite information how can we follow that up?—But that is what you cannot get, because the moment that that information is made public, from that moment that man is an enemy to the company, and they boycott him and

harass him, and the merchants cannot really tell those things in their own interest.

30340. Have you any other instance?—In addition to the coasting steamer there is also flow from Belfast carried past Strabane at 4s. a ton by both the Midland Company to Derry, and the Great Northern Company to Derry, while there is a steamer at 4s. Now, while that steamer was in operation the railway companies did their best to throttle that little thing, and they actually carried at 3s. and 2s. 6d. in some cases. The steamer, owing to this unfair competition, ceased to ply from Belfast to Derry, with the result that the competition is practically closed.

30341. When was that?—Towards the last couple of three years.

30342. When did the steamer cease?—Inside the last six months, inside the last twelve anyway. You see, since my appointment I have lost hold of the commercial side of affairs. I am living, as I have said, for the last six years in municipal business, and I have not got hold of the commercial side.

30343. You say that has been done within the last six months?—Yes; and now they charge 12s. to Strabane, and they actually pass our door and go on to Derry, fifteen miles or less. There are some doubts any of them are inclined to pay them 8s., and they will bring it on to Derry, and bring it back to us, and in some cases they have actually imported goods into Strabane in the time of the competition by bringing them on to Derry and having them re-ent to traders in Strabane, and I was told yesterday that it was possible, some short time ago, in sending flour to Lismore, that they were able to send the flour to Belfast direct from Derry, at a special rate, and re-ent it from Belfast back to Lismore, within ten miles of Belfast. There is talk of a levelling up of the Great Northern Railway rates in that regard.

30344 *Lord Pirrie*.—A levelling up?—A levelling up or down, as you wish.

30345 *Mr. Sarsen*.—You do not care which?—Yes. I would rather have levelling down, because it is a comparatively poor district.

30346 *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—Now, in reference to the allegation that the railway and canal have a secret understanding, have you any direct evidence to confirm that?—Well, I know there was that feeling.

30347. You say that the canal received £1,000 from the railway company for the purpose of putting a bridge over the canal?—That is an actual fact. That has been published and never repudiated by the owner and present lessee of the canal; and there was an impression that Mr. Grace, the Duke of Abercorn, got another £1,000, but Mr. Bailey, who is his agent, repudiated that at the late Commission, and I accepted his contradiction of the statement; but the Canal Company have never repudiated that they got £1,000, and put that levelled bridge there practically in order to stop the canal as regards sea-going vessels.

30348. *Chairman*.—That was to build?—They have no right to £1,000, to filch away the public right, and if he spent the £1,000, it should have been applied in the interest of the public rather than in the interest of a company who had no right to do these things. We had no opportunity to get it out at the Canal Commission.

30349 *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—Do I gather that it is your experience, generally, that where competition exists the railway does its best, naturally enough, to stifle that competition?—That is our experience.

30350 And that when they cannot absolutely kill the competition they come to some agreement with the competing company as to the rates or fares which they will charge?—Yes, sir; that there is collusion between them.

30351. We know there was some understanding between the Great Canal Company and the Great Southern and Western, and of course the Great Northern Railway Company will, no doubt, answer the references made to any understanding as to the rates to Strabane, but do you consider that there is some reason for thinking that these understandings are come to?—Of course it may have been for reasons of State, but there is no doubt that a representative of the Midland Company and a representative of the Great Northern Railway Company were seen together in close conversation in Derry and in other places as well, and they were spotted and noticed; and it may have

been affairs of State, or commercial or economic questions that they were discussing. I would not say that they were discussing an arrangement of rates, but we have no competition between the Midland and the Great Northern. They work parallel.

30353. Then, the benefits which were assumed to accrue from the competition of existing systems have ceased to exist, in your opinion. There is no such thing as real, effective, competition under such circumstances?—There is no competition in that regard, that they have equal rates, generally.

30354. And the facts that have come under your notice as regards the want of competition have led you to form the opinion which you have expressed in favour of State purchase rather than amalgamation?—Yes, sir.

30355. At any rate you are in favour of some change in the existing order of things?—Yes, sir, very strongly in favour of State purchase as against these numerous companies. It will end in economic management, and there will be equality of charges if the railways are all managed by the State instead of in this way.

30356. Were you in the room when Dr. Thompson was giving his evidence this morning?—I was. I largely agree with Dr. Thompson, and with all he said with respect to the management of the lines, and how the managers do the work. They manage them as if it were merely a matter of dividends rather than of the utility and benefit, at all events, of the railways to the country.

30357. Dr. Thompson was opposed to State purchase, and in favour of amalgamation?—I think, sir, the evidence that I heard Dr. Thompson give is reasonable.

30358. Chairman.—Dr. Thompson was distinctly in favour of State purchase and Irish control?—But perhaps I might not agree entirely with Dr. Thompson, on some of the things. I agree with him generally, but I cannot agree with all of them.

30359. Colonel Hulsehouse Peo.—As to acquisition by some responsible authority?—Yes.

30360. Would you be in favour of some Irish authority?—I would insist on an Irish authority, because really they would know the wants of the districts, and you would want to get an Irish authority, a localised Irish authority.

30361. And it must be responsible to Irish opinion, and only in that way can it be done effectively—an Irish board of administration, responsible to the opinion of the country?—Only in that way can we look for any development of the country, and for advantage and utility to the districts.

30362. I see, at the end of your evidence, you speak about the powers of the Department of Agriculture to intervene on behalf of traders as being ineffective?—That is my experience. It is only a paper that these powers exist, and, as a matter of fact, that is the opinion of the traders in Strabane. I was speaking to one man very largely engaged in business, doing £50,000 or £60,000 worth of business. His opinion is that if the railway rates are not taken in hand, and some effort made to reduce the industries of Ireland, the end of it will be there will not be any railway rates to deal with. Our population is dwindling, and there will be nobody for the railways to serve. The railway companies, in their own interest, are doing a most harmful thing for themselves by their excessive rates.

30363. I think the impression you have formed as regards the action of the Department is hardly borne out by the facts. For instance, to mention only the recent acquisition of the Donegal system by the Great Northern and Midland Railways the Department have been instrumental in obtaining several important concessions in the interests of the traders. When the Bills were passing through the House of Commons they got several clauses introduced, one of which was that agricultural and market garden produce should be carried by passenger trains at the rates not exceeding one-half the small parcels maximum; several other useful clauses were also inserted on their representations?—Yes. What I mean to say was that so far as relative to the Department taking up claims on behalf of traders.

30364. Chairman.—That is the point that the witness raised?—I fully agree that the Department of Agriculture has done a great deal in the way of bringing about co-ordination and introducing co-operative societies for the benefit of farmers, and I suppose

they have done their best. I do not take exception to that at all.

30365. Colonel Hulsehouse Peo.—Have you studied the report recently issued, where it gives the details of seventy cases, no forty of which they had been successful in accomplishing something on behalf of traders?—Well, I know more than seventy cases in the town of Strabane. If you are told that a certain man will give you protection, and you apply to him, it is disappointing to get a reply such as we got in one of the cases in which we made an appeal. The reply from Dublin was that they would be very pleased to go on with the matter, but, unfortunately, they had no funds. Then, where is the utility, or where is the use of the Department of Agriculture?—You make an application, and they write back that they would be very pleased, but they have no funds.

30366. You cannot expect the Department to take up every little case that occurs. The best way, in the first instance is for the Department to represent the matter to the railway company, and those representations have gained, in a number of instances, some material redress, and where they have not done so, and the case is of sufficient importance, then the Department are justified, and probably in one or two cases they have been willing to incur considerable expense in appearing before the Railway and Canal Commission?—In that regard, the gentleman who is with me will give more specific evidence, because, as I told you, I have been out of commercial life for the last five or six years.

30367. Then, as to the Act of 1856, and the powers given under it for the development of districts. I think you are under a misconception as to that Act. It gives power to spend money in further provision of light railways in the first clause, and in the second clause it gives power to aid in facilities for transit and distribution by coaching and steamer services and so on; and under certain conditions, where they are satisfied as to the necessity of the railway, they have power to expend public money in the construction of piers, quays, etc. The Board of Works, as I say, have to be certified by the Lord Lieutenant as to the requirements of the case, and two railways referred to in the evidence of the previous witness are the only ones constructed under that Act?—We think the Great Northern has not helped Tyrone to the extent it should have done, considering the immense profits and revenue it has made out of the county.

30368. There are several considerations governing the operation of the clause, and I think what you refer to would not be possible.

Examined by Lord FINLAY.

30369. As Town Clerk, I should like to ask you about the high rates on porter. Would it not be an advantage to the town if the poor people did not waste their money in drinking porter? Again, is there anything special about the porter traffic for Strabane, and are there large quantities of it consumed there?—There is a reasonable quantity, and there is a complaint about the high rates.

30370. Yes; you mentioned that before?—Because the gentleman who complained asked me to speak about it.

30371. You don't object to the high rate on porter, and people drinking one bottle instead of two?—Well, for all the porter I drink, it would be a non-paying concern.

30372. And is the reason it is sent from Dublin to Monacomb, and from Monacomb back to Derry, the same as applies to Malin, which is never good to drink until it has made several voyages?—I am afraid it would not improve on the journey.

30373. Do you think it is desirable that the Strabane people should have good quality well shaken up?—This is the effect of an individual trader against a big company, to show them that he has a bit of backbone in him, even if he loses expense a ton.

30374. I thought they wanted better quality?—Oh, no; I do not think Sir Arthur Guinness requires any help as regards the quality of the staff he makes.

30375. Mr. Serjes.—You are specially unfortunate in Strabane?—Yes.

30376. You share a general grievance, and you have some particular grievances of your own?—Yes.

30377. You suffer heavy disadvantage in comparison with Derry?—We believe we do.

30378. Are consignments to Derry charged much lower rates than to Strabane by the railway?—Yes;

Oct. 11, 1907.

Mr. T. R. Peely,
Town Clerk,
Strabane.

The utility
of the Department
of Agriculture
incurred
owing to the
want of funds.

The powers
granted by
the Board of
Works under
the Act of
1856, in the
construction
of Railways,
and the sub-
sidising of
coach and
steamer
services.

The excessive
porter rates—
Dublin and
Strabane.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. T. B.
Duffy,
Town Clerk,
Strabane.Complaint
as to pro-
cessual rates
to Derry.

they pass our door and go on fifteen miles at a cheaper rate. And equally as to export rates. They load at Derry and come past our door, and although we have a fifteen miles shorter journey for export goods, they charge Derry more something less for export goods.

30378 Why is that?—I really cannot say, further than what I believe, that perhaps they have more influence over the directors than we have.

30379 Is there any reason why the railway should give an undue advantage to Derry in the matter of export?—I cannot know for what reason.

30380 Unless that they are so much in the habit of giving it for import traffic that the habit clings to them?—I suppose that is possibly one explanation.

30381 I suppose you know that railways do not give lower rates to seaports because they like to do it?—My own idea is that they keep the rates as high as they can possibly keep them, as long as the traffic will repay them to do it, irrespective of whether it furthers the resources and industries of a country or not.

30382 Do railways give lower rates to seaports because they like to do it?—I do not believe they do.

30383 But they do it because they cannot help it?—In order to get a share of the traffic.

30384 Do they do it because the traffic would not come to them otherwise?—That is what they do it for.

30385 Derry gets lower rates, therefore, so far as imports are concerned, because, if the railway did not give lower rates the traffic would go somewhere else, and the railway would lose it?—Yes, possibly.

30386 Is not that the reason?—Undoubtedly the reason.

30387 Now, what I want to know is this. You have a navigable waterway to Strabane?—Yes.

30388 How is it that you are unable to convince the railway company that if they do not give you reasonable traffic rates you will take your traffic by sea to Derry, and thence by water to Strabane?—One of the reasons is, as I told you, that up to the time we got that Provisional Order, we were prevented, and now that we have the Provisional Order, and they have lighters on, no merchant has the backbone. That is really one of the things.

30389 Just so; if you will not bring pressure to bear on the railway?—But there are then back-door bounties that these merchants can get that we do not know generally about.

30390 What merchants?—Merchants in Strabane and other towns.

30391 Do you mean that merchants in Strabane, by getting secret rebates are prevented by the railway from taking that stand against high rates on traffic that they ought to take in the interests of Strabane?—Yes, I do, and, if you will permit me, I will give you instances, and I know, as a matter of fact, on statements out of the person's mouth, that there is money given in some cases, and in other cases facilities of travel—passes over their line, and passes to and from other places.

30392 The question has either to be faced or not faced. You stated a while ago that if we did not take your word you would give the names. It is not a question of taking your word, it is a question of proof; and when the companies are challenged with this allegation they say, "Who was it?" and if no name is given the case falls to the ground. Can't you see that?—I do not see that, sir, because I have a feeling that Colonel Piesse would not deny the statement I make. I have a feeling that Colonel Piesse knows I am in a position to make the statement, and I would be inclined to challenge his denial of it.

30393 Of what?—Of the statement of giving these money rebates to traders, and giving privileges and preference to them by reason of proximity of the traffic. Now he is sitting in the next chair to you, and he remains silent.

Colonel Piesse—I will answer.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

Issue of
passes to
Strabane
merchants to
refuse
traffic alleged

30394 Unless you are prepared to give the names in connection with the allegation, it is always possible for the railway companies to say—"How can we answer the statement when the particulars are not given?" Have you any name?—I have a number.

30395 Then give them?—They gave a pass twice to London to Mr. John Devine, and they promised

him a third pass, and they refused the third one. They were first class and solemn to London. And they gave him that on his promise to give them his vote in connection with the Strabane and Letterkenny Railway, outside the matter of traffic altogether.

30396 Colonel Piesse—You mentioned the name of Mr. Devine. What was the second case you mentioned?—That is all I mentioned.

30397 Mr. Sexton—At what time?—During the last two years.

30398 Is he a merchant in Strabane?—He has a large shop in Strabane. He imports nearly 300 tons of tea in the year. He is nearly the largest importer of tea in the North of Ireland.

30399 Do you say these favours are conferred for the purpose of inducing people not to take any traffic by the canal, previously used as a competitor of the railway?—Not so much that as—"If you send traffic our way, although we nominally charge you the rate, we will give you a slight advantage in the way."

30400 They make it worth the while of important men to send their traffic by the railway?—Yes.

30401 And then the rest of the people are prejudiced?—Yes, sir. We want to have the canal worked satisfactorily. We want to have a monopoly of the trade to Strabane by the canal.

30402 Is it within the power of your community to make the canal an effectual waterway? because if it is, the railway will have to deal with Strabane as it does with Derry?—It will if it is taken in hand by the State.

30403 Then you think that the public resources and authority ought to be brought to bear, and will have to be brought to bear, upon this particular question, as upon the general question?—Yes; that is my belief. That is what I want to speak of.

30404 You say, generally, that the railways in Ireland have not encouraged industry?—They have not.

30405 You say they have discouraged it?—In our district they have made an effort to encourage it, and, as I told you, in that case where this large miller wanted to open trade in the West, they actually killed that trade.

30406 I do not follow you?—Well, you would have a rate for ninety miles of rail, from Derry to whatever distance from Derry—to Sligo or other places.

30407 For your case, plainly?—Well, for traffic over ninety miles the railway company made a special rate, and when that man wanted to have the same traffic rate for seventy-five miles of the same identical way, shortening that traffic distance by fifteen miles, they refused to allow him to carry at the same rate as the place where the distance was ninety miles, and insisted on getting it a ton more.

30408 Give the places?—Well, Sligo.

30409 Sixty miles to Sligo, do you say?—I do, sir.

30410 The longer distance was from Derry to Sligo?—Yes, and the shorter distance from Strabane to Sligo.

30411 And the arbitrary distinction worked against Strabane?—Yes, and killed that industry. He is a very large buyer, and the district is a very large agricultural one.

30412 As to legal costs, do you think that as long as the railways continue to be private property the companies will always be able to overcome the efforts of the traders who complain by making low cost prohibitive?—Yes, they will go on appealing from court to court, and no trader will take the risk.

30413 There is no escape from that, except by making the railways public property?—There is not any hope of remedy in that respect.

30414 Your conference with the Great Northern ended satisfactorily, did they?—I will tell you. It was partially satisfactory and partially not satisfactory.

30415 At the beginning they made some concessions, but at the end your efforts proved in vain?—Yes.

30416 On the question of competition, just a word. There is no effectual competition?—There is not.

30417 There is absolutely no competition in rates?—No competition in rates.

30418 And the competition in traffic rendered itself into breaking up the traffic and sending it by various routes, instead of by the shortest?—Yes.

30416. With the result that the working expenses are run up, the margin of profit is restricted, and an argument is created against reducing the rates.—*Yes.*

30416a. Looking at the reasons which have produced the present state of affairs—the influence of the English railways in Ireland, the preference to the foreigner in the supply of food to England over the Irishman, and the flooding of this country with imported goods as against the Irish manufacturer—do you think that the management of the Irish railways and the ownership of them should be free from external influence, and should be subject to the influence of Ireland merely?—*I believe that.*

30417. That the ownership should be vested in Ireland, and that the lines should be worked by an authority responsible to the people of this country acting through a Board of experts?—*Yes.*

30417a. Colonel Pless.—I want to make a statement. In the first place, I beg to say that the company have never carried any flour traffic from Belfast to Londonderry at 3s per ton.—(Witness.)—I did not say your company. I said that some of the companies did. There is competition with the Northern Counties Company.

30418. Colonel Pless.—I can only speak for the Great Northern.—I am perfectly satisfied that the gentleman who told me would not tell an untruth.

30418a. Chairman.—Sometimes the information is not quite accurate?—He said not only 3s, but in some cases, 2s 6d, and actually 2s 3d.

Colonel Pless.—I think it is very unlikely, but, at any rate, the Great Northern never carried at anything of that sort. Then, again, we have no arrangement with the canal in any way. They carry goods in competition with us, and without any reference whatever to us.

30419. Chairman.—They fix their own rates, independent of you?

Colonel Pless.—Entirely independent. With regard to the general allegation made, no rebates in my potato traffic have been paid that were not available to anybody. At a certain time when the circumstances of the Dublin market were such that there was a strong case for reduced rates, we did, temporarily, reduce the rates by giving a rebate to all parties.

30420. Chairman.—From whom?

Colonel Pless.—From Strabane, Omagh, Victoria Bridge, and sundry places, and wherever was done was available to everybody alike. There is no special consideration to anyone and not to another. With regard to the potato traffic, the rate from Dublin to Strabane was 12s a ton for many years. That was a carried rate for a distance of 150 miles, and an extraordinary low rate. There was a competition by sea for a while, and while that existed the rates were temporarily reduced, and to all alike, and when the rate was reverted to it was reverted to by all alike. Everybody was in the same boat. It is quite true that during that competition, and even now, because there is a competition to some extent—there is a sea competition to Londonderry, and there is, in addition, the carriage from Derry to Strabane, which costs 2s. 6d. to 2s. more, and, therefore, the ordinary rates to Strabane are that much more than to Derry owing to the sea competition. If, as my friend says, they can send a steamer from Strabane, they have the matter in their own hands. That would compete with Derry on equal terms, and settle the question. The next point in this supposed rebate given to Strabane to influence traffic. I am not quite sure what he means, but he mentioned the case of Mr. Devine. I wish to say that nothing was done to Mr. Devine to influence his traffic in the least, in any manner or form. Mr. Devine took a particular part in connection with the Londonderry line—the promotion of it—and he went to London on our account in connection with it.

30421. Chairman.—As a witness?

Colonel Pless.—He was not called, but we had to take him; and we, of course, gave a pass, as we did to all the witnesses who went.

30422. Chairman.—When was that?

Colonel Pless.—In 1904 or 1905. There were two questions—the question of the Londonderry Railway and also of a guarantee from certain local bodies.

30423. Chairman.—If he went on your business, of course you would give a pass.

Colonel Pless.—Certainly. There is another question, rather confused.

30424. Chairman.—He said he was promised three passes.

Witness.—And twenty-six passes to Enniskillen.

30424a. Colonel Pless.—Will you kindly say who made this last promise?—One of your representatives.

30425. A pass to anyone under such circumstances must go through my office, and I give it a most emphatic contradiction.—Well, your representative promised it.

30425a. Chairman (to Colonel Pless).—You need not say another word about that pass to Londonderry because, if the men was going on your business for the railway company, to save expense you would give a pass.

Colonel Pless.—As regards going to Enniskillen, I have never given a pass, nor anyone else.

Witness.—He has never got it.

Colonel Pless.—I have never promised it, and nobody else could promise it.

30426. Colonel Hutchinson Poy.—But he got more than one to Londonderry.—(Witness.)—He got two.

Colonel Pless.—The question was before the House more than once. The witness is not very clear about it, but I wish to say that the rates from Strabane to inferior stations in the country are, in all cases, less than the rates from Derry. There is a large milling industry in Strabane, and the rates, further, are all on a mileage basis as compared with Derry.

30426a. Chairman.—The evidence is to the contrary.

Colonel Pless.—That is the fact, and let them contradict it. The rates not only for that traffic are less to the inferior to other stations—than from Derry, always saving and excepting the transport competition traffic.

30427. Chairman.—I asked that question.

Colonel Pless.—I gave that most positively, and I am sure Mr. Poy cannot give anything to the contrary.

30427a. Chairman.—He was very explicit that he did not know, personally, about the commercial matters.

Witness.—There are the figures out of the merchant's office, in his own hand-writing, and those are taken of the company's schedule.

(Witness handed in the following list of rates.—)

BERKELEY.—5 ton 190s.

Station.	Miles.	Strabane.	Derry.	Influence.	Comparative statement of rates for broad wheels from Derry and Strabane to various stations, indicating preferential treatment to Derry.
Omagh	38	4 0	3 6	1 0	
Enniskillen	40	5 6	4 10	1 6	
Donaghadee Junction	45	6 6	7 6	0 10	
Maginn's Bridge	48	7 6	8 6	1 0	
Londonderry	70	1 0	0 8	1 2	
Devenish	48	8 0	7 0	1 0	
Loch	51	7 0	6 0	1 0	
Portage	60	7 6	6 6	1 0	
Cashinacree	52	7 6	6 6	1 0	
Belmont	50	7 6	6 6	1 0	
Ballymacree	52	7 6	6 6	1 0	
Bransford	57	7 6	6 6	1 0	
Netterty	60	8 2	10 0	0 10	
Brookstown	73	6 0	0 2	1 2	
Florencourt	68	7 6	6 6	1 0	
Belmoe	76	8 0	9 0	0 2	

30428. Mr. Seaton.—What do they show?—The rates from Derry and Strabane to several towns up the line, and they show an advantage in favour of Derry.

30429. Chairman.—Colonel Pless has stated that it is with reference to purely local traffic in Derry, independent of sea traffic.—I say, independent of sea traffic, that Derry has a preference rate over Strabane.

Oct 17, 1907

Mr. T. R. Poy,
Treas. Clerk,
Strabane.

Great
Northern
Company's
Board
of directors
in the way
of passes to
traders.

Great
Northern
Company's
statement
that the rates
from Strabane
to inferior
stations are
on a mileage
basis com-
pared with
Derry.

Comparative
statement of
rates for
broad wheels
from Derry
and Strabane
to various
stations,
indicating
preferential
treatment
to Derry.

Oct. 17, 1897. 30430. Colonel Plean.—Take any town; Omagh, for instance!—Omagh is even worse than Strabane.

Mr. T. B. Fealy, Town Clerk, Strabane. 30431. Chairman.—What is the rate from Derry to Omagh and Strabane to Omagh?—The rate on potatoes from Derry to Belfast is 7s, and from Omagh it is 12s. 6d.—although it is thirty miles shorter they actually charge 12s. 6d.—and that tells against the potato merchant in Strabane and Omagh.

Colonel Plean.—I have the rate for potatoes from Derry to Kesh, that is, a town in the interior—and it is 7s. 4d. a ton and the rate from Strabane is 5s. 6d., that is 1s. 10d. less.

30432a. Chairman.—That is proportionately lower.

Colonel Plean.—That applies to all interior stations.

30432. Lord Pirrie (to Witness).—Your own figures show it!—Colonel Plean says that the rate is 1s. 10d. less. We say that is reasonable, but when it comes that the rates between Strabane and Derry came down to 10d., that is, Derry can export by paying 10d. or 1s. or 1s. 3d.—that is unreasonable and a preference to Derry.

Colonel Plean.—I am not sure what he is referring to now—what his meaning is. If he is speaking of through rates—Cross-Channel rates—

Witness.—No.

Colonel Plean.—If he is speaking of them, the through interior rates are, of course, higher than the port rate, because the interior rates are made up, usually, by the addition of the rate to the port, to the rate from the port to the interior station by the cheapest route. That is the almost invariable system of making Cross-Channel rates.

Witness.—I do not mind—if you will allow me to put this in—both this and the potato rates. I feel I have delayed you too long. These figures speak for themselves.

(Witness handed in the following list of rates:—)

TABLES ON POTATOES TO BELFAST.
(3 ton lots.)

From Londonderry.	..	..	100 cwt.	5 4	per ton.
Do Strabane.	..	..	25 do	7 4	do.
Do Victoria Bridge.	..	..	80 do	5 4	do.
Do Newrytown.	..	..	75 do	5 4	do.
Do Omagh.	..	..	60 do	5 4	do.

TABLES TO LIVERPOOL.
(Baker or Derry or Belfast.)

From Londonderry.	..	..	..	5 4	per ton.
Do Strabane.	..	..	..	5 4	do.
Do Victoria Bridge.	..	..	..	5 4	do.
Do Omagh.	..	..	..	5 4	do.

LOCAL RATES—POTATOES

Strabane to Omagh.	..	..	4 8	per ton.
Do Keshiford.	..	..	5 4	do.

TABLES ON POTATOES TO DUBLIN.
(3 ton lots.)

From Londonderry.	..	..	100 cwt.	5 4	per ton.
Do Strabane.	..	..	151 do	5 4	do.
Do Victoria Bridge.	..	..	154 do	5 4	do.
Do Newrytown.	..	..	151 do	5 4	do.

RATES TO MANCHESTER.
(Baker or Derry or Belfast.)

From Strabane.	..	..	27 11	per ton.
Do Victoria Bridge.	..	..	25 5	do.
Do Omagh.	..	..	23 4	do.

LOCAL RATES—FRUIT.

Strabane to Londonderry.	..	..	5 8	per ton.
Do Belfast.	..	..	10 9	do.

Colonel Plean.—May I supplement what I said!—These gentlemen had communication with us in 1893 or 1894 about rates, and I met several of them then, I think, both Strabane and Derry, and I thank our friend amongst the rest, and this is the conclusion of the meeting. It is dated February 23, 1890.—“The rates to-day agreed to by the railway company are accepted by myself and the traders associated with me as satisfying our complaints.” That document is signed by Mr. Colhoun, who acts, I think, as Secretary of the Mercantile Association in Strabane, and myself, and I remember Mr. Fealy was one of the parties that we met, and that was the result of our deliberations.

Witness.—There is more in that memorandum.

Colonel Plean.—It is agreed, mutually, that application be made to the Railway Commissioners to postpone the application for one month the railway company, in the meantime, will consider as to the rates now agreed to being made retrospective to any extent.” An application had been made to the Railway Commissioners by Mr. Colhoun. It had nothing to do with the past, but they asked me, having made the concession, “Will you go back?” and I said, “That is rather a large order,” but we did go back, to some extent.

Mr. Colhoun.—You were compelled to.

Colonel Plean.—No, we were not compelled. We did it voluntarily.

30432a. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—You returned between £300 and £400.

Witness.—With reference to the point that the shilling rebate is available to everybody, it is not known that they can get the shilling, and how can they claim what they have no idea they will get?

Colonel Plean.—It is in the rate-book.

Witness.—As regards porter, there is no association between Dublin. It comes on the Great Northern to Omagh, Strabane, and Derry, and as a matter of fact they charge 7s to Derry, 12s to Strabane, and 17s. 6d to a little place further up than Strabane. I have a lot more to tell you.

30432. Mr. Sexton.—Got Mr. Colhoun to tell it.

Witness.—If you have patience I am sure he will give you a good deal of useful information.

30432a. Mr. Sexton.—You have made it pretty clear.

(The witness handed in the following return:—)

Heavy Drapery.—Manchester to Strabane via Holyhead costs 30s. 10d. nett—about 180 miles by rail and 80 miles by water. Same class of goods. Belfast to Strabane, about 80 miles, rail, 20s.; Dublin, about 150 miles, rail, 27s. 6d.; Dandel, about 107 miles, rail, 35s. 9d.; Galway, about 120 miles, rail, 42s. 11d.; Limerick, about 250 miles, rail, 42s. 4d.; Youghal, about 300 miles, rail, 60s. 5d. With result that merchants are obliged to import from England on account of excessive rates, and cannot, on the other hand, sell shirts and under clothing at home.

Mr. THOMAS F. SMYTH, M.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30434. Mr. Smyth, you are a member of Parliament?—Yes, Sir Charles.

30435. And you appear on behalf of Mohill Rural District Council?—Yes.

30436. Are you a member of the Council?—I am, Sir Charles.

30437. And are you a member of the Joint Committee in connection with the Cavan and Leitrim Railway?—Yes.

30438. What part do you represent?—South Leitrim.

30439. In Parliament?—Yes, South Leitrim.

30440. And the Council asked you to give evidence on their behalf?—Yes, Sir Charles.

30441. What other railways run there?—The Cavan and Leitrim, and the Midland Great Western runs through a small portion.

30442. The Cavan and Leitrim—how long has it been constructed?—Nineteen or twenty years.

30443. Just tell me, in your own words, how that railway was guaranteed? What was the amount guaranteed, to begin with?—£232,000 was the amount of the capital.

30444. What percentage?—Five per cent.; 5 per cent. by the ratepayers and 2 per cent. by the Treasury. At the time the guarantee was made, and the railway was being made, there was a promise given that the rate would never exceed more than 4d. in the 2, whereas it has gone as high as 2s. The present rate is 1s.

30445. It has gone as high as 2s.?—Yes.

30446. It is levied on a limited area?—On a limited area. It is very serious. The present rate is 1s.

30447. Where does the Cavan and Leitrim Railway terminate?—It ends at Drogheda, in County Leitrim, and goes on to Bellefleur in County Cavan, and then there is a branch from Bellefleur to Arigna, in County Roscommon.

30448. That could be extended to the Arigna coal mines?—If it was extended three miles to Arigna mines it would have lessened the rate considerably.

30449. At present all the coal produced at the Arigna mines is carted a distance?—Yes; a distance of three miles.

30450. At considerable expense?—At considerable expense.

30451. Was the Arigna mine started after the railway?—The mining company was formed after the railway company.

30452. How is that railway company managed?—The railway company is composed of fourteen directors, eight of whom represent the shareholders, and six represent ratepayers, four appointed by the County Council of Leitrim and two by the County Council of Cavan. But then the shareholders' directors are in a majority of two.

30453. Although the shareholders are guaranteed 5 per cent. by the district?—Yes.

30454. Still they have a majority of the directors and practically the management of the whole railway is in the hands of these shareholders' directors?—Yes.

30455. I suppose you will agree, and we will all agree, that the majority should be the other way?—Yes.

30456. That the ratepayers should have the majority?—Yes, when they have to pay it is right that they should have the majority of the directors. The secretary of the mining company is the manager of the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway, and there are four shareholders' directors on the railway that are also members of the mining company.

30457. It has been represented before us that in the judgment of the witness—I forget the name at the moment—that the line was worked more in the interests of the proprietors of the coal mine than of the railway?—Yes.

30458. Mr. Serles?—It was Father Gray.

30459. Chairman?—Yes. Do you agree with that?—I do.

30460. You have experience of the district?—Yes.

30461. The directors live in Dublin?—Yes; 37, College-green is the office in Dublin, and the ratepayers consider that if they had their office in Bellefleur great savings could be effected in lieu of

rent and caretaker's salary and other incidental expenses in connection with the directors in Dublin.

30462. Although the amount is not large in itself?—It comes to something.

30463. In a little concern like this a saving of £200 or £300 is considerable and would relieve the ratepayers?—It would, Sir Charles.

30464. Is the fuel used on the railway supplied by the Arigna colliery?—Yes, and they charge 14s. 2d. per ton to the railway company although the railway company takes the largest amount of the coal that is supplied by the mining company.

30465. You think that if the coal company was perfectly independent of the railway and the railway independent of the coal company it would be better?—I believe it would be to the advantage of both companies.

30466. At any rate, to the advantage of the railway company?—To the advantage of the railway company, of course. That is the one the people are concerned about.

30467. That is brought personally to the ratepayers?—Yes, Sir Charles.

30468. We have heard from two or three witnesses that some time ago the Treasury made a free grant of £24,000?—Yes; Mr. Walter Long gave a free grant of £24,000 for making an extension from Drogheda to Roskilly to the Shannon, and from Arigna station to the mine, but the ratepayers, though they were anxious for the extension, were afraid that on account of the working of this extension there would be a considerable addition to the rates. At the time the line was made they were assured that the rate would never be more than 4d., and it rose to 2s. in the point, and they were afraid of the further extension.

30469. And it was this fear of additional rates that induced the ratepayers to decline that extension?—Yes.

30470. Having had the previous experience of that 2s. rate?—Yes, Sir Charles.

30471. I am not surprised at their attitude. The Cavan and Leitrim Railway, I suppose, compares rather a favourable position?—Yes; very favourable, as it connects with the Midland at Drogheda, and then at Bellefleur with the Great Northern, so that, I think, if it was properly managed, as it connects these two railways, there would be more profit and less expense on the ratepayers.

30472. In other words, you do not think, in your judgment, the railway is worked economically?—No.

30473. And if it was, the probability is that these ratepayers would not be called upon for anything?—That is the fact—that is the general belief—for so much as they are, anyway.

30474. And any reduction in that rate would be an advantage?—Yes, if it was only a penny in the rate it would be an advantage—any little thing.

30475. Now, to get it on the note, what was the receipts in 1906?—According to the Barometrical Auditor's report the receipts in 1906 were £11,603 1s. 11d., and the expenditure was £10,603 5s. 10d., leaving a balance on the year of £1,000 16s. 1d.

30476. How was that dealt with?—There was £500 of that put to the reserve fund, making £1,500 at the present time, and I suppose the balance, £400 or £500, went in lieu of rates, but, of course, 5 per cent. had to be paid to the shareholders.

30477. At any rate the deficiency was such that it had to be added on the ratepayers?—Yes, and the last rate was 1s., and I have heard that the next rate will be 1s. 1d. or 1s. 2d.

30478. Is the 1s. in the 6d. levied over the whole district, or does it vary according to the districts?—It is levied on the guaranteeing area, and it keeps to a certain district. For instance, parties living west of the Midland Great Western have to pay no rate at all. It goes into a radius of five miles, of where the railway runs, although the railway is at Drogheda, one of the termini of the line, the ratepayers there have to pay none of the rate, although they have the accommodation.

30479. So that it falls on a limited area?—A limited area, Sir Charles.

30480. How are the accounts audited of this railway?—The barometrical in the guaranteeing area are on

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. Thomas F. Smyth, M.P., Representative of the Mohill Rural District Council.

Completed as to the high charge paid to the Arigna mining company for coal supplied to the Cavan and Leitrim Railway.

The ratepayers' refusal of the Treasury Grant for extension of the Cavan and Leitrim line.

Allegation that the railway was not worked economically.

Improved management would reduce the payments under guarantee.

Receipts, expenditure, and allocation of balance for 1906.

Suggestion that the guaranteeing area is too restricted.

GE. 17, 1907.

Mr Thomas R. Smyth, M.P., Representative of the North Rural District Council.

The General Auditor presented from making a proper audit of the Curran and Leitrim Railway's accounts.

Access to the books of the stations refused to him.

The Angus district rail in mineral wealth awaiting development.

The proposed extension of the line to Rosbeg and Angus (lines recommended) provided the ratepayers were given no free against him.

titled to appoint an auditor, and they have appointed a baronial auditor, and according to his own statement and the report which he sent to the County Council of Leitrim, he was refused by the directors of this railway permission to audit or inspect the accounts of the railway stations—only whatever accounts or books were at the head office. That is his own statement in the report to the Leitrim County Council.

30479. According to your judgment and the judgment of those you represent that is not an effective audit!—No, it is not, Sir Charles, and there was an Order in Council that provided that the books should be examined.

30480. Mr. Smyth.—It says "the books and accounts of the proprietors"—not their books at some particular place?—The whole of the line. Section 18 of the Order in Council prescribes for that.

30481. Chairman.—Yes say distinctly, from the auditor's report, that he was refused access to the books?—Yes. I have the copy of the auditor's report here, that he sent to the Leitrim County Council, and he distinctly states, and I am only quoting his own words, that he was refused the right to audit the accounts or inspect the books at the different stations.

30482. Lord Pirbright.—You mean that books that he asked for were refused?—Yes; that is his own statement. I have a copy of his report which he sent to the Leitrim Co. Council and to the Joint Committee.

30483. Chairman.—All that he would have access to would be books in Dublin, which are merely abstracts of the traffic on the line from the various stations?—I suppose so.

30484. And that he was not in a position to go back to the stations and see whether the Dublin book was a correct record of the traffic on the line?—Yes.

30485. In that particular district are there any minerals that are at present undeveloped?—The area is very rich in mineral wealth—coal, flags, iron ore, pottery clay, and other minerals, and they are dormant on account of not having proper railway facilities.

30486. Is it your opinion that if this particular line was extended to accommodate the mine that you refer to, and the minerals that you refer to, that more employment would be given?—It would give considerable employment, Sir Charles, and it would also mean the connecting of the North of Ireland with the South and with the river at Rosbeg. I would like to see the extension, but not except a guarantee was given by the Treasury that there would be no further loss on the ratepayers.

30487. I understand that the ratepayers have suffered so much that you could not expect them to be asked to even anticipate another guarantee?—They would not, under any consideration.

30488. You would rather say, "Leave it alone at present"?—Yes, leave it as it is at the present time because they would not know where it was going to end.

30489. Is there any doubt in your mind as to the extension of the railway being of considerable advantage?—It would open up the district considerably and develop the industries.

30490. And industries now dormant might be galvanised into life?—Yes.

30491. And profitably?—Yes.

30492. To the advantage of the county?—To the advantage of the county.

30493. I think that is all I want.

Examined by Mr. Serjeant.

The creation of a Reserve Fund, and the uncontrolled authority of the Shareholders' Directors.

30494. Can you say, Mr. Smyth, how additions are made to the reserve fund in this railway?—No, except from what the auditor, Mr. Gannon, has stated in his report. He states that £600 was added to the reserve fund, which was created in the last two years.

30495. If the ratepayers and the Exchequer together are paying about £8,000 a year for this railway, it seems strange if the shareholders' directors can subtract money from the profits on their own authority.

Do they do that?—So it seems, according to his report.

30496. That means that they lay an additional levy of £600 upon the barony?—Yes.

30497. How far do you think it would effectually meet the grievance of the ratepayers if they had a majority on the Board?—I could not say; but it is believed that if it was under popular control it would be better managed anyway; it would reduce the rate somewhat; I don't suppose it would wipe it out altogether.

30498. It would control the officials?—Yes.

30499. They might be obliged to reside on the line?—Yes.

30500. And if the majority were composed of ratepayers' representatives, do you not think that by selling the coal at a fair price, or not having it sold at all, it would bring them to reason, even though the process might cost something for a while?—I believe it would eventually.

30501. About the finances of the line—Suppose the Treasury commuted their liability of £3,500 a year, on the Tralee and Dingle scale, it would provide about £130,000, do you think that the shareholders would be willing to make any compromise, or would they insist upon the market value of their shares?—They would agree to any compromise that would lessen the rates.

30502. The shareholders?—I thought it was the ratepayers.

30503. Would the shareholders take the face value of their shares or insist on the market value?—I could not say; it would be a matter for their own generosity.

30504. Chairman.—They would want more than the face value.

Mr. Charles Barrymore, Solicitor.—I do not know what trustees would say.

30505. Mr. Serjeant.—Solicitors and trustees would have something to say!—They would be inclined to get all they could. They were not generous in the past, and would hardly in the future.

30506. If they insisted upon the market price I fear that the redemption of their capital by a Treasury commutation, even at the most liberal rate, would leave your liability much the same?—Yes.

30507. About lines in this position and districts under such burdens, do you think the best solution would be to link up all the lines of Ireland, light and heavy, into one system under public authority?—Yes.

30508. And let these straggling lines be borne upon the Budget of the national railway system, and relieve the locality?—Yes, exactly.

30509. About the price of coal; do you know on what principal they proceed in fixing these prices?—I could not say. I think it is unknown to any person.

30510. They did formerly sell the coal to the railway and the district at the same price as to people further away?—Yes.

30511. When did they make the change?—I could not exactly say when the change was made.

30512. I suppose they calculated that people at a distance could get other coal?—They calculated that.

30513. And that the guarantees who made the railway, and the railway itself, are at their mercy?—Yes; and the manager is secretary of the Mining Company, and he is away canvassing for orders for coal, and the line of railway, which is only 4½ miles, is managed by an assistant, who gets £204 a year.

30514. You agree that the two main causes of the present unfortunate and dangerous economic state of Ireland are—first, that the English railways, in the pursuit of what they would consider a justifiable commercial policy, allow to the foreign importer of food into Great Britain rates lower than are allowed to the Irish exporter into the English markets?—I do thoroughly agree with that.

30515. That is due to certain action of the English railways and to certain action of the Irish railways acting and reacting upon each other?—Yes, it handicaps the development of Irish industries.

30516. Is this the second cause—that the Irish railways, acting again in conjunction with the English railways, have in operation to low a scale of import rates into Ireland for the introduction of goods that any one who attempts to manufacture goods in Ireland finds himself cut out by the low rates at which

imported goods are carried past him to the point of sale?—Yes; I thoroughly agree with you in that. These are the two main causes that have handicapped Irish industries.

30514. Does it appear to you, as a public man concerned in this question, that the only possible inference to draw is that Ireland must be allowed to look after herself, that those lines should be vested in an Irish authority, responsible to the Irish people, acting, of course, through a Board of competent experts?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Fox.

30515. With regard to the liability of the different counties, I think that Leitrim pays 1s. 2d. and Cavan 5d. Is that right?—Yes. Leitrim pays considerably higher than Cavan.

30516. But of that 1s. 2d. in the £ you get half the difference between 6d. and 1s. 2d.—that is, 4d., received by the Local Taxation Account?—Oh, no. The ratepayers at the present time have to pay 1s. while the Treasury pays 8d.

30517. In any case where the poundage exceeds 6d. in the £ the Local Taxation Account pays half the difference?—I am not aware of that.

30518. You will find that is the case. In this case the rate levied is 1s. 2d. I know they are paying 1s., and get no refund.

30519. I think you must be under a misconception, because that is clearly laid down—3 per cent. comes to 1s. in the £.

30520. And off that you get 4d. back. It is given back in some shape from the Local Taxation Account?—I am not aware of it. I would be very glad if it were.

30521. Mr. Benton.—The report says that Leitrim is paying 1s. 8d. on the average. The law is, I think, and you will correct me if I am wrong, that so much of that as is over 6d. is paid half by the Treasury, and that makes the rate in Leitrim 10d. in the £.

30522. Colonel Hutchinson Fox.—No; the difference between 6d. and 1s. 8d. is 8d., and that is divided between the guaranteeing area and the Local Taxation Account.

30523. Mr. Benton.—Yes. That would be 4d. and 6d., making 10d., and can Mr. Smyth say whether the balance is made up from money that already belonged to Leitrim—feeding the dog with its own tail?—Exactly.

30524. Colonel Hutchinson Fox.—Of course, it is a considerable amount; but with regard to the £24,000 grant—you said a guarantee was asked. The only guarantee, if it was such?—I did not say a guarantee was asked.

30525. In your proof I think you say it was. But I believe the facts of the case were that the Treasury stipulated that if the works cost more than £24,000 any deficit should be borne by the baronets?—Yes, and much more—the working of the extension. The Treasury did not provide at all for that, so that if the extension were worked at a loss as well as the main portion of the line, it would be the ratepayers would have to pay for it.

30526. I think both the County Council and the Cavan and Leitrim Company, when they went into negotiations with regard to this extension in 1903, had an estimate made of the probable cost, and that estimate was £28,000. Subsequently the Board of Works got an independent engineer, Mr. Barlow, and his estimate was that £24,000 would absolutely cover the cost. Under those circumstances, where the Treasury were willing to lay the line down free of cost, a line which the people said would develop great traffic and would pay its way—there was no dividend to be borne—no money to be found out of the receipts in respect of dividends—all the receipts had to do was to meet the expenses of the line—surely, if the development of traffic was such that it would not pay working expenses, you could hardly expect the Treasury to give a guarantee?—Yes; but the ratepayers before were told everything in connection with this, and that it would never exceed 4d., and they got an assurance then, and would not depend on

another assurance, for the rate, instead of being 4d., was up to 8s.

30527. There was nothing at the back of the rejection in the minds of the Leitrim County Councils—that they wanted some other line up in the North—was that at the back of it?—That may be with the County Councils from the North.

30528. I only ask you as one of the members for the decision whether that had not something to do with it?—Possibly it may have, but I do not believe it was the main cause of it. I think that the principal reason was that the ratepayers were afraid that they would be liable for a further sum.

30529. Though the shareholders' directors gave a personal guarantee to the County Council, they were not satisfied?—A personal guarantee is very little use if it is not in writing. I am sure they are honorable men, but we know that when it is not in writing it is of no use.

30530. It was a written guarantee?—I am not aware that it was a written guarantee.

Examined by Lord Francis.

30531. When the baronial auditor, the public auditor, in connection with this railway wrote such a report to the County Council of Leitrim that he was refused a sight of the books at the railway station, I take it he must have been cognizant of the fact that you have stated in your evidence, that the railway company was actually paying 16s. 3d. per ton for the coal, while, at the same time, for small quantities, the coal was selling at a lower rate in the district?—The auditor did not state that.

30532. You said that, but if the auditor was doing his duty, was not he bound to surcharge the directors that were directors of the railway company and acting as managing directors of the coal mining company. Could an auditor pass over that, or did he make a satisfactory audit?—I cannot say that.

30533. Is not that what you mean in your evidence. As a County Councillor, before you struck the rate, or agreed to pay the rate levied, are not you bound to get the auditor's report?—I am not a member of the County Council of Leitrim.

30534. Does the rural district of which you are a member pay a rate? Did not you pay?—Yes.

30535. Have you, as a rural district, not appeared to the County Council against paying a rate which, according to the auditor's public report, he has not had an opportunity of settling?—I am not aware that any protest has been made from the time the report was published.

30536. When was the report issued? Have you paid any levy since the report?—The rate was already struck—it was struck some time during the year.

30537. Is not it your duty now as the leader to organize a protest?—It has been struck again.

30538. Cannot you protest against paying a levy the reasonableness of which the auditor says he has not had an opportunity of ascertaining, and where the evidence is that the directors of the line and the directors and shareholders of the coal mining company are charging themselves a considerable sum more than they are charging the public? Have not you got a very strong case against making a levy?—I believe there will be a protest.

30539. I believe you have made such a case. Did the auditor surcharge those directors who have willingly and knowingly been charging the company more than the public?

Mr. Ordeur Harrington, Solicitor.—I am informed, might I say, that the coal contract was put up by public tender in the ordinary way a company does. It is only fair to mention it.

30540. Lord Francis.—We have no evidence of that. Have you got the paper asking for the tender?

Mr. Ordeur Harrington, Solicitor.—I am not in a position to prove it now. I thought it was only fair to mention it.

Lord Francis.—We asked for documents. In the case of the last witness, the evidence was objected to unless he produced the documents.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. Thomas P. Smyth, M.P., Representative of the Midell Rural District Council.

The answer that I have given to the Committee of the Treasury Grant for extension of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway.

Suggesting that the County Council have a good reason for refusing to levy the railway rate until their auditor is satisfied proper facilities for examination of the railway books.

Anticipated protest against the railway rate being imposed.

The purchase of coal by the railway company from the Argus Mining Company.

Oct. 15, 1867. Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—We are not prepared for this. This is the third time the Casson and Lentin Railway has been up, and that is their position. They say they took contracts.

30533. Lord Pirrie.—Taking your evidence, Mr. Smyth, which I think is most important—I think you have made a strong case against the Government Department authorising a levy to take place when the national auditor says he has not had facilities for checking the accounts. That is what I take it you mean to put before us?—He states that in his report.

30542. And you believe that to be the case?—Yes.

The question of cheap import rates.

30541. I am not quite clear about one of your answers to Mr. Sexton. Did I rightly understand that you blamed the English railway companies for giving cheap import rates, and, if so, why do you blame them for doing a thing which should be beneficial for Ireland? Is not it a benefit to Ireland to get the cheapest possible rates from other countries?—I agreed quite thoroughly with Mr. Sexton's views on the matter.

30541A. That does not answer my question.

The excess of the inland rates over the import rates—handicaps Irish industries.

30542. Mr. Sexton.—My question was whether the excess of the inland rates which the Irish manufacturer has to pay for distributing his goods over the country does not handicap him in competition with the low import through rates.

30542A. Lord Pirrie.—You agree with that?—Yes.

30543. From the way I took the note I thought you meant the opposite?—Yes.

30544. Colonel Hutchinson Peé.—With regard to this question of audits, I understand your complaint to be that your auditor was not allowed to inspect the books at the different stations along the line?—Yes, Colonel Peé.

30545. I take that refused to be correct. Do you know that the Order in Council only applies to the half-yearly or yearly audits of the accounts, as about to be presented to the County Council and submitted to the auditor? You surely cannot expect a railway company to allow a visiting commissioner to be running up and down the line looking at the books? I do not think even if he did get them he would make head or tail of them?—According to his statement, he was not allowed.

The powers of the Board of Audit under the Order in Council.

30546. The Order in Council provides that an auditor shall have access to the books for the half year, and those accounts are supposed to be sent to the Secretary of the County Council every half year, and then they are not only audited by your auditor, but also by the Board of Trade Arbitrators, and it is on the certificate of the Board of Trade Arbitrators that the Treasury make their remittance to the County Council. But you can hardly expect that the books at all the stations would be open at any time to the auditor, and I think they would be very little use to him if they were—that a County Council auditor was to be going up and down looking at the books whenever he chose to do so, no railway would submit to it.

30547. Chairman.—I do not think that is the point. Supposing there is an item in the half-yearly accounts and the auditor says you have got down here a certain amount for expenditure and it does not seem to me to be reasonable, and I want to see whether it is right, and I want to go to the station where it took place, and the auditor is perfectly justified in saying that, but nobody has suggested that he should roam about looking at the books.

30547A. Colonel Hutchinson Peé.—This gentleman says the joint committee appointed a national auditor, and according to his own statement to the County Council he was refused the examination of the books at the stations?—That is his own statement.

The question of access to the station books by the auditor.

30548. Chairman.—My contention is—I do not know whether I am right, but I think the Order in Council would not entitle him to go and inspect the books along the line.

30548A. Lord Pirrie.—Are not they bound to give the books?

30548. Chairman.—An auditor that has got a doubt as to any item in the half-yearly statement and wants it verified should have access to the books.

30549A. Colonel Hutchinson Peé.—I think it is not clear that the auditor was refused access by the Company?—The auditor, Mr. Casson, stated that in his report.

30550. Chairman.—Mr. Smith does not know anything about it?—No; I go by the report, and I am a member of the joint committee.

30551. Colonel Hutchinson Peé.—I do not gather from your evidence that he did question a particular charge?—He was refused the right to inspect the books. I am sure a public man like him would not make that statement without being justified.

30552. Lord Pirrie.—He has given in evidence that the auditor was absolutely refused the books necessary to enable him to check for certain things, and if he was, I say the County Council should not have paid the levy?—That is a copy of the report, and I cannot go further than that. I am sure he would not make the statement without being justified.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Might I say something to clear the matter up. Till now I was not aware that the chairman of the company was in the room, and he states, and if you like he will give evidence, that the contract is advertised for public tender. The second thing is about the station accounts. Auditors do not wander about the stations, but they come up to town, and every single document is at their disposal.

30552. Chairman.—That may be an explanation, but, as a matter of fact, if an auditor wants any information about any item that he questions he can go and trace it at the particular place where the expenditure took place.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—These accounts and vouchers are all in town.

30552A. Chairman.—They are copies.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—No; the originals.

30553. Chairman.—They are not the station accounts; they must be copies.

30553A. Mr. Sexton.—It is a settled principle of audit that auditors ought to be allowed to see what they require. If an auditor does not see what he requires he cannot properly audit the accounts, and this auditor says he did not get what he required?—He states he did not.

30553A. Chairman.—Mr. Smyth simply gives what the auditor says. I think we may leave it there.

30554. Mr. Sexton.—Before you retire I want you to help me to clear up a question upon a matter of fundamental importance. There seems to be an impression that those who are pressing for a reform of railway rates wish to ask for a revision either of import rates on food into Great Britain or the import rates on imports generally into Ireland. As I understand, that is not asked for, but it is pointed out that the export rates out of Ireland by comparison with the import rates from the Continent into Great Britain do subject Ireland to hardship, and that export rates out of Ireland to Great Britain should be revised?—Yes.

30555. Secondly, not that the rates on imports into Ireland should be revised, but that the high inland rates in Ireland, which hinder Irish industry and trade, should be revised to put them on a fair level with the import rates.

30556. Chairman.—I think your questions have been perfectly clear. Now I will have one. When this £24,000 fine grant was refused, if it had been coupled with the statement that the ratepayers in that district would not be called upon to pay any deficiency, would not they have accepted it readily?—Undoubtedly if there was any guarantee.

30557. The reason of refusal being the fear of ultimate liability?—Of further rates.

Mr. JOHN COLEMAN examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30553. You are a member of the Strabane Mercantile Association?—Yes.

30554. Were you in the room this morning, and did you hear the evidence given by Mr. Feely?—I did.

30555. The Commission is anxious not to have any evidence duplicated. I put to you the general question—you heard the evidence—do you agree with what Mr. Feely says?—So far as he dealt with the subjects under consideration, I agree.

30556. And any evidence you give will be entirely new and independent of anything he said?—Yes, or to modify anything said in connection with his examination, or more fully explain it.

30557. We don't want fuller explanations. I want to avoid duplicating the evidence so well given by Mr. Feely, but any new matter we will listen to. Now, just tell me, please, what are you?—A grocer, in business in Strabane, and a fruit merchant.

30558. How long have you been in business?—I have been twenty years in business.

30559. What is your connection with the Mercantile Association?—Secretary.

30560. Honorary secretary?—Yes.

30561. We have heard about the districts affected. First of all, I see here a new matter we did not hear about this morning—the local fire-day winks. Where are they?—There are no local fire-day winks nearer than Coalisland, but bricks are made at Fethall.

30562. I am quoting your words about fire-day winks?—They are at Coalisland, and it appears that the rate to Strabane for these is about 3s. 6d., and that similar manufactures can be brought from England and Scotland, and that the rate from England and Scotland encourages the importation of this manufactured article—these fire-day goods—against the home-made article.

30563. Are you alluding to bricks and tiles?—To fire-day bricks and tiles and drain-pipes.

30564. Your contention is that although you can get a local supply of these articles at this particular place, the low rates from Scotland beat this particular local traffic out of the Strabane market?—It does—that's the point, and it is accentuated by this, that the wagons in which these are loaded (fire-day goods) are shunted about, and the re-shunting breaks them in the wagons, so that when they arrive at their destination they are smashed, and any claim made for them won't be paid, and when you take into account the breakage and add it to the carriage you have a high carriage indeed.

30565. What are the local goods generally at Strabane?—Grain, potatoes, fruit, eggs, butter, cattle, poultry, &c., and so forth. These are the principal that are exported from Strabane district.

30566. Are the rates generally satisfactory for these articles?—No, they are not; they are most unsatisfactory.

30567. I suppose you say they are too high?—Yes, and I will prove it. Take pork, for instance. Taking it from Strabane to Derry the rate has been 5s. 6d. They carry the cured article back to Strabane, and it is 5s. 10d. The unmanufactured article should be cheaper than the manufactured article.

30568. As bacon it is cheaper?—Bacon is cheaper than when it is pork.

30569. Why should it not be so?—I think the farmer should get a cheaper rate for his pork.

30570. Bacon is better to carry for the railway company than pork?—It must be pork before it is bacon.

30571. You say the rate for pork is higher than for bacon?—Yes.

30572. But bacon should be carried at a cheaper rate; it is better and easier for the railway company to carry.

30573. Colonel Piers.—It is in a lower class.

30574. Chairman.—Common sense would say that the railway company could load more bacon than fresh pork in a wagon?—They have it in smaller consignments, and get more out of it.

30575. You say pork should be cheaper than bacon?—Yes, because it is the unmanufactured article.

30576. Lord Pirbright.—It can be easily injured?—It can be, more easily.

30580. Mr. Serles.—Pork is the raw material?—Oct. 17, 1907.

Yes.

Colonel Piers.—It is very perishable.

Witness.—I don't know if any farmers were paid any claims for it.

30581. Chairman.—With regard to through rates, the through rates are in some cases reasonable?—I think there is another point—about loading and unloading.

30582. I am not going through your proof; I want to curtail it, well, then, what do you say about unloading?—There is a large traffic in fruit from Strabane, and I wish to bring particularly before you that I have complained to the railway company a year ago, and Mr. Scott, the Omagh Superintendent, has seen it, and the agent at Strabane has seen it, and I have pointed out how a remedy could be found out of the difficulties.

In the blackberry traffic there is 200 tons or more every year shipped from Strabane, on an average. There is no provision made to deal with it, and heavy loads of about 4 cwt.—a cask is jammed down, being carried at owner's risk. It is partly thrown and partly laid down on the ground; there is no raised platform at Strabane Station to unload stuff, with the result that the packages suffer as being unloaded. There should be a raised platform to receive the goods, but there is none, and even at the goods-receiving depot I have been unloading boxes of bacon, and there was no means of receiving it, except throwing it off the cart, and the only means of saving it from being broken was some empty bags, and then it was thrown down, and injured, and would not be signed for until the injury was repaired again. These evils have been complained of to the railway company, and they say they cannot afford to make the necessary accommodation.

30583. To sum up, your contention is that the accommodation for dealing with the goods traffic at Strabane is not satisfactory?—Yes.

30584. And that there are no proper stages for unloading there?—None.

30585. For any of that class of traffic?—There's stages on one side, but where the blackberries go there's none.

30586. That is a traffic that has to be dealt with in about two or three weeks?—Yes, about a month. It is perishable traffic. It goes to England mostly, and Scotland.

30587. You say you have been refused a copy of the rates at Strabane?—Yes.

30588. And your goods were not sent forward until the charges were prepaid?—That's so; it is well known to Mr. Piers.

30589. That, I suppose, was a private dispute between you and the company?—We had to bring them into Court before the Railway Commissioners for increased rates; and I wanted those rates to help my case, and the agent at Strabane would not give them, and asked me what I wanted them for, and he refused to let me have access then to the rate-book, and afterwards denied that he had done so. I brought it under the notice of the Board of Trade, and he was castigated, but that's all that happened. He wanted to obstruct my way of getting information. He knew he was wrong, but he wanted to impede me.

Colonel Piers.—The statement was denied that there was a refusal of access to the books. It's the old story.

30590. Mr. Serles.—They have always let you see it since?—Yes. They knew they were wrong, but they wanted to impede my progress.

Colonel Piers.—How many years ago was that?—I think it was in '99.

30591. Chairman.—There has been an improvement since?—Yes; in the dimension of the concern, yes.

30592. With regard to urban preference in favour of Londonderry, you agree with the evidence of Mr. Feely?—Yes, I do.

30593. He gave some instances of rates?—Yes; and I have some tabulated here.

30594. We will put them on the notes as they are. Do you object to that?—No.

Complete—As to household platform accommodation at Strabane goods depot.

As to refusal of access to the rate-book at Strabane station.

As to instances of preferential treatment of Derry in the matter of rates.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Witness handed in the following:—

Mr. John Colbourn, Representative of the Strabane Non-artificial Association. Table of preferential rates as before of Derry.

Preference Rates.	Articles.	Derry and Derry.		Derry and Strabane.	
		Old.	Presently.	Old.	Presently.
Derry. — { Strabane, Derry.	Agricultural Seeds. —	—	$\frac{5}{10/6}$ CD	—	15/6 CD
	Groceries. —	—	15/15 CD.	—	15/6 CD.
	Green and Dried Fruit. —	—	15/15 CD.	—	15/6 CD.
	Soap. —	$\frac{5}{8/4}$ SR	—	—	$\frac{8}{1/6}$ S.S.
	Flour. —	$\frac{8}{4/4}$	$\frac{8}{4/8}$ (Grosser 1/4)	—	$\frac{8}{15/4}$ S.S.
	Potatoes. —	$\frac{5}{4/6}$	$\frac{5}{4/4}$	—	$\frac{5}{17/4}$ S.S.
	Cement. —	$\frac{10}{4/6}$	$\frac{8}{4/6}$	—	$\frac{8}{17/4}$ S.S.
	Small Parcels. Derry and Derry, less than Strabane.	—	—	—	—
	Iron and Construction. —	—	11/6 CD	—	11/6 CD.

Complaint that there has been a general increase of 50 per cent. in the Great Northern Company's rates over those in force prior to 1892.

25595. Chairman.—I will first ask you a question on that. You have given rates to illustrate your evidence as to an undue preference in favour of Londonderry?—Yes, partly.

25596. Those are typical cases—it is not complete!—No, it is not complete.

25597. We had evidence this morning about porter and other things you refer to. I should like you to explain that. Some years ago you say the Great Northern Company, although they were paying a dividend of 6½ per cent., increased their rates to about 50 per cent.?—Yes.

25598. Can you tell us, in a few words, what does that mean. You say they increased the rates to about 50 per cent., sometimes more?—Yes, that means that the rates in force previous to '92 were increased; that time they got power to do so; what was 3s. 4d. was changed to 6s. 3d.; what was 5s. 10d. was increased to 8s. 7d.; what was 6s. 8d. was increased to 9s. 7d.; that is on the large merchandise.

25599. Were not they subsequently altered?—Yes, when we brought the case before the Railway Commissioners. Then as to smalls, fifteen miles over one rate prior to '92 was 7s., afterwards it was 11d. In the new scale it has been reduced since to what it was prior to '92.

Colonel Pless.—Will the witness give cases where an increase was made in '92?

25600. Chairman.—Was not it at a time when there was a misunderstanding about classification and a cancelling of rates and so on?

25601. Colonel Hutchinson Fox.—The Canal Act of 1883 provided for the railway companies working on a new schedule of rates, and the railway companies did send it in, and they were reduced in many cases, but in others the rates were put higher than they had been previously.

25602. Chairman.—I think they were subsequently rectified. You remember, Colonel Pless, what I refer to.

Colonel Pless.—Yes; there was a revision.

25603. Chairman.—That has been put right since?—Witness—No.

25604. Mr. Sexton.—The railway companies drew up schedules in which they increased the rates; the Board of Trade subsequently drew up schedules, the rates in which were not generally so high as those proposed by the railway companies, but not so low as they had been before; they have been in force since; higher than the rates had been before 1892, but not so high as the companies tried to put them?—The Board of Trade never submitted any rates. We complained against the increase of rates as the English people did, and I understand cases were tried before the Commissioners, and in one of the cases the Commissioners decided that they had no right to increase the rates beyond those charged in '92. At the settle-

ment, before the Railway Commissioners, we agreed on rates, and although promised to be reduced they have never been reduced in many cases, and the increase is general over the Great Northern Railway Company's system.

25605. The judgment of the Railway Commissioners has not been applied to other rates in the same condition?—Mr. Pless refused to reduce them to what they were in '92.

25606. Other rates have not been reduced?—No, although promised by Mr. Pless.

Colonel Pless.—There is no judgment of the Railway Commissioners on the subject.

25607. Chairman.—You read a memorandum this morning.

Colonel Pless.—I have another one here. The officer of the Board of Trade, in '95, had a meeting in Londonderry, and Mr. Colbourn and his friends met and complained of the rates, and a list was agreed upon and then was adopted and signed by Mr. Colbourn. It is the 28/5/95. There are eight rates, and Mr. Colbourn says the above rates are agreed to except as to smalls. It left a slight difference as to smalls between Derry and Strabane, that was afterwards rectified. That embraced the finding before the Board of Trade; the Hon. Mr. Pelham was down there.

Witness.—After we complained of the increased rates, we only mentioned specific rates and were told down to them, and those rates were brought before the meeting, as Mr. Pless says, and they were made right. We disagreed on the small parcels. That's only a preliminary to having all the increased rates brought to what they were in 1892.

25607. Chairman.—All the rates you raised before the Board of Trade Inspector were reduced?—Not all—except the smalls.

25608. I mean except the smalls?—Yes.

25609. Mr. Sexton.—Your cause of complaint is that they were higher than they were before '92?—Yes.

25610. And you say there are other rates higher than in '92, which have not been reduced?—Yes. Mr. Pless wrote on the 30th March, '99. I shall deal with the details according to the various heads. You say, Mr. Pless, you will be ready to reduce anything not already reduced to the level of what it has been. That has not been properly explained on the memorandum I signed, that he would reduce the rates to a level with those to Derry—that we at Strabane should pay no more than they pay in Derry. Mr. Pless for half an hour previous to the document being signed was writing and re-writing to make it suitable for signature. It says, "The rates to-day agreed to by the railway company are accepted by myself and the traders associated with me as satisfying our complaints."—That is, those rates we discussed then, but there were rates outside

The protest from Strabane as to increase of rates prior to 1892.

those, which Mr. Pless promised to reduce, and this was never done.

Colonel Pless.—Show me any promise I have not carried out.

Witness.—It is contained in your letter of March, Mr. Pless.

30611 Mr. Sexton.—Other rates open to the same complaint?

Witness.—Yes.

Colonel Pless.—The memorandum embraced all that was agreed on at the meeting at the time in Berry.

30612a Chairman.—That is admitted.

Witness.—No, it sets forth what we did agree. It was filed in the Railway Commission report. That is only a certain small quantity of the rates, but these embraced rates that have not been reduced even now, and we brought a second case before the Railway Commission.

30612 Mr. Sexton.—If the witness would put in a table of any rates which are higher than they were in 1902, that would facilitate the railway company's examination.—They are well aware of that.

30613. But it should be put in the evidence.—For instance, Newtownswearat &c. &c. that we used to get for 3s. 6d. for bacon.

30614. Chairman.—I don't see anything there to justify a charge of breach of faith on the part of Mr. Pless.—That is written for the purpose.

30615a. Don't mind for what purpose. There is nothing to justify a charge of breach of faith.

Colonel Pless.—After that settlement with Mr. Pless, representations were made to us that the rates required modification. I had a meeting with the people of Scotland. Mr. Colburn was there, and several other people. I think we spent most of the day at it, and we modified a considerable number of the rates voluntarily. This memorandum I have read was agreed on as a result of that meeting. It is dated 20th February, '00, and says: "The rates to-day agreed to by the railway company are accepted by myself and the traders associated with me as satisfying our complaints."

Witness.—Yes that is, "the rates to-day."

Colonel Pless.—The rates agreed on. I assumed they brought forward everything, and that I was not to be called on a week afterwards to go into a fresh list. The memorandum goes on: "It is agreed mutually that application be made to the Railway Commissioners to postpone the application for one month, the railway company in the meantime will consider as to the rates now agreed to being made retrospective to any extent." That was voluntary on our part, and we did make them retrospective. There was nothing to compel us to make them retrospective, or to reduce them. The number of rates was about sixty. We thought this arrangement had closed all the ground, but we are apparently no farther on.

30616. Chairman.—You admit you signed that?

Witness.—Yes.

30617a Mr. Sexton.—Can you put in a list of the rates that are higher than in '92?

Witness.—Yes.

30618 Mr. Sexton.—Well, do. Send them to the Secretary. The rates in force on the Great Northern, which are higher than in '92.*

Examined by Lord PIERCE

30619a You speak of breakage, and of excess rate from Coalbrook to Strathane, have not you considerable cartage from Coalbrook brick works to the station—the wagons don't run into the brick works?—I don't know.

30617. Is not there considerable breakage in putting them into the cart, joggling them along the road, and, when you come to the station, upsetting the cart—yes any there is a great deal of breakage owing to shunting?—Yes, I have a letter—

30618. You don't know of your own knowledge?—I have seen them myself, and know there is a great deal of breakage.

30618a Colonel Pless.—Has he any claim that has not been made in respect of these?

Witness.—I don't deal in fire-clay goods—Mr. Pless knows that.

30619 Chairman.—Mr. Colburn said he was told.

30619a Lord PIERCE.—Yes, the distance from Coalbrook to the railway station, and then away round, it is quite natural some breakage must take place.

Colonel Pless.—Our experience is that they are carried with remarkable freedom from damage.

30620. Chairman.—They are loaded with straw?

Colonel Pless.—Yes, and heather.

Witness.—Oftener without it.

30621 Lord PIERCE.—With regard to the rate-book, do you mean that the book at the station is not correct. You say that the rate in the rate-book was 12s., and you are getting it for 7s.; do you mean that the rate-book is not marked for everyone to see it?—That's what I found on my examination, I say so.

30622 Did you draw the attention of the railway company to it?—Yes; I investigated it at the book-office in Berry.

30623. The actual rate was 7s., and the rate-book showed 12s.—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON Post

30624. With regard to the question of rates, do I understand that in addition to the rates raised since '92, that you also complain that the rates in force are in some instances higher than in '88 or '91?—Yes.

30625. That was owing to the effect of Lord Railton's Committee. The schedule which they drew up, while it decreased in a great many instances rates, did actually authorize an increase in other directions, and that was complained of by traders, with the result that a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the matter, and they recommended, in December, '85, that the Board of Trade should be employed, and, failing them, that the Railway and Canal Commission should have power to investigate any increase in rates retrospectively—which had been made since the Act came into force on the 1st January, '82. You say the rates were increased since '92. I am afraid that does not come within the definition of the Act. The new schedule came into force in January, '93, and the powers the Railway Commission have to make the railway companies justify an increase of rates only applies to rates increased since January, '93. I think the railway companies will bear me out—it is not to rates increased above what they were in '92. That is the law, which only applies in the case of a rate increased since the schedule came into force, in January, 1893—the railway companies have on the complaint of a trader to justify that increase. Then I notice that you speak at page five of your proof of the difficulties of getting fruit brought to London—delivered in London—as compared with foreign produce.—Yes.

30626. You know one reason why foreign produce, agricultural and otherwise, is brought at low rates, is the conditions under which that traffic is consigned, viz., in very large quantities, and carefully packed and handed to the companies in such condition that they can afford to give the foreign producer a very low rate. It does not pay the railway company better to give the foreign producer a low rate than it does to get a high rate from the English producer—at is the other way?—Yes.

30627. The cost of operation is largely dependent on the magnitude of the traffic?—When you have a small perishable traffic, like the blackberry traffic—when we have a small traffic in fruit such as Ireland's compared with foreign countries, there should be special facilities given to handle it favourably in competition with the foreigner.

30628. I don't want to draw comparisons between conditions totally different—the conditions under which we have to consign traffic are small consignments, frequently at irregular intervals, often, as railway companies point out, and as the Board of Agriculture points out, not suitably packed, and

Oct 17, 1900

Mr. John Colburn, Representative of the Strathane Mercantile Association.

Damage to fire-clay goods in transit

Difference between a rate charged and that shown in Strathane rate-book.

The Railway and Canal Commission's power to investigate retrospectively in rates.

The different traffic conditions for foreign produce compared with home traffic.

* (See Appendix No. 18).

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. John
Coburn,
Representative
of the
Strabane
Municipal
Association.

Co-operation
of the farming
classes in the
matter of
hauling
alleviated.

The Board of
Trade's action
in the
adjustment of
grain rates
not always
successful.

Differences
between com-
pulsory rates
charged and
those on the
rate-books.

Porter rates—
Londonderry
and
Dublin
included.

Mr. Michael
Martin,
Representative
of the
Ballinamore
Rural District
Council.
Complains
as to the
working of
the Great
and Eastern
Railway.

those conditions very much affect the cost of handling and of operation. Lower rates and charges would be desirable and might increase traffic, but I only want you to bear in mind the conditions under which foreign traffic is brought in?—Yes.

30629. Do you think that more might be done by way of co-operation, such as is carried out in Denmark, for example. The principle of co-operation amongst the farming classes has contributed to raising Denmark to such a high level as she occupies. Don't you think more could be done than way in Ireland?—I think more could be done by way of co-operation than has been already done. We are beginning to co-operate for the benefit of the general community, and in that way the value of the fruit of the country can be enhanced, and it could be more heavily thrown on the market and better prices obtained for it.

30630. You don't appear to have called for the intervention of the Board of Trade?—We obtained the first concession from the Board of Trade, and got the old rates we had prior to 1888 restored; as I have already mentioned, and when other abuses took place we put them forward, but utterly failed to obtain redress.

30631. The evidence we have had with respect to appeals to the Board of Trade has been rather to the contrary, but you can only speak for yourself?—For instance, there is a level crossing at Strabane which is continually blocked up by engines. It is so manipulated that they are in the passengers' way. Any lame person has to go over a high bridge.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

30632. You know that the railway companies are obliged by law to charge the rates set out in their rate books, and no other rates?—Yes.

30633. You say in your abstract that the rate books are misleading at both Londonderry and Strabane, and that at Londonderry the rate stated for porter from Dublin is 12s., whilst it is carried at a lower rate, namely, 7s. 6d.—Yes.

30634. And in the case of flour 5s. was in the rate book, and 4s. was charged?—Yes. It has been raised since.

30635. How is it now?—5s.

30636. Does the rate book state one rate, and do the company charge another?—That rate is made right now.

30637. Which of them?—The flour rate.

30638. The rate book and the actual rate charged now agree?—Yes.

30639. About the porter?—I took this rate that I refer to in February. Porter was rated in the books at 12s., whilst it was carried through the competition of a Dublin steamer at 7s. 6d. The rate for potatoes—

30640. Keep to the porter. Do you say that whilst the rate book showed a rate of 12s. a rate of 7s. 6d. was charged?—I got the stationmaster to verify it. I said, "Surely it can't be."

30641. Was the 7s. 6d. rate charged to some of the consignees or to all?—To none of the consignees.

30642. Is there anything else in your abstract that you think of great importance to mention briefly, so as to have it put on record?—There are two or three little things.

30643. State the most important of them as briefly as possible?—The general bearing of the officials is somewhat better than it was.

30644. You told us that?—I saw some of the accommodation provided. Here is a photograph of one of the station houses, and the measurements of it.

30645. Can you not select something bearing more closely on the public interest as regards the management of the railways and the rates and fares?—The classification of the consignments put down at five and six tons bars the small dealers from taking the full advantage of the lower rate. Those who are able to deal in large quantities get the advantage; but the great bulk of the consignments pass on the railway in small lots now, and that means that the railway company gets larger rates.

30646. The existing scale operates oppressively on the small dealers?—It does.

30647. What would you make the maximum for "small"?—The scale of 5 cwt. for "small" was reduced to 3 cwt. for the purpose of making the trader believe that there was a concession. It turned out the other way. I applied for an analysis of the rate, but was "deigned." I could not get it. I think it should be a small minimum over the tonnage, and should be 2d. or 4d. on the consignment.

30648. Up to what weight?—Over the present 3 cwt.

30649. The rates for tonnage should be less, and a uniform charge for the "small"?—It should be so.

30650. It should approximate more to an average rate?—If you send a parcel at the rate of 12s. a ton it would cost 1s. It should be 6d., with 3d. additional for collection and delivery.

30651. You would have the line of demarcation where it is, but you would alter the scale?—I would alter the scale.

30652. Is there anything else that you wish to mention of importance?—I sold blackberries delivered in Glasgow at 25 a ton, and made an application for a reduction to Colonel Pless, and the reply was that they were sold in London at 3d. per lb., and nothing was done.

30653. I have gone through your abstract, and it is a formidable indictment of the present railway system. Is there anything else that you wish to say?—I just wish to refer to the rates for school children going to Londonderry. They increased the rates for them. There used to be only second-class tickets, but when the Donagh railway extension to Derry came into operation they have given third-class tickets, and the fares have been reduced.

30654. We know that where the railways are publicly owned facilities for getting children to school are granted?—It does not seem to be taken notice of by our railway companies—the matter of encouraging children to go to school.

30655. Looking to the number of matters in which the present railway system is at issue with public needs, do you consider that there is no adequate remedy for it except to purchase the lines and vest them in an Irish authority, responsible to the people, and working through a board of experts?—I agree with that. It is necessary to have a board of experts. They should be representatives from the various districts.

30656. There would be a board of experts to manage the railways, and over them a representative body, to conduct the policy and direct the arrangement of rates and fares?—Yes, I would agree with that.

Colonel Pless.—Might I make one observation?

30657. Chairman.—Is it worth while?

MR. MICHAEL MARTIN EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

30658. You appear on behalf of the Ballinamore Rural District Council?—Yes, sir.

30659. And you want to speak with reference to the Carran and Leitrim Railway?—Yes.

30660. You have heard the evidence of Mr. Smyth to-day?—I have.

30661. Did you hear or read the evidence of Father Gray yesterday?—I did not read it all, I read some of it.

30662. Is there any new point that we have not had before that you would wish to mention?—There is.

30663. What is the first portion?—Their evidence pertains practically to the same thing, but it is not given in the same way I would wish to give it on a great many points.

30664. What does the District Council object to?—They strongly object to the railway and the mining company being worked by the same officials.

30665. We know that, we have had it over and over again. Why repeat it?—The manager of the railway is secretary to the mining company, and he also—

30666. We had that?—He is also a farmer.

30667. Well, that is something new?—He has a farm of land beyond Ballynure, which is at the northern end of the Carran and Leitrim Light Railway. It must be evident that as he has to manage a railway company and be secretary of the mining company and a farmer—he is paid for his time and attention in managing the railway and he has to look after his farm and buy cattle and oats and hay for the Arigna Mining Company's horses, and then look after the management of the line, and surely a man with so many irons in the fire cannot keep them all hot.

30668. I should think you are probably right. This particular District Council of which you are a member—what rate in the pound do they pay towards the railway?—A shilling in the pound at the present time. Previous to the construction of the line there were pamphlets sent broadcast amongst the guaranteeing areas promising that they would not have to pay more than 4d.

30669. We have had that over and over again?—And we were then to get cheap coal.

30670. Is it your opinion that the line is not worked to the advantage it should be?—Certainly that is my opinion.

30671. And that the ratepayers who have to guarantee the five per cent. interest on the capital should have the majority of directors on the Board—is not that your view?—It is.

30672. And if they had the majority they would take care that the management was better than it is to-day?—Certainly.

30673. And the better management would result in better profit and less money to be paid by the ratepayers?—Quite so.

30674. Is it not that your evidence in a nutshell?—Yes, on that point.

30675. What is the other point?—The directors are as well paid one way or the other, they do not care whether the line pays or not.

30676. Well?—They are paid for going up and down to Dublin, they get a free pass and a guinea a day. I have seen them.

30677. Chairman?—That was covered by what I said, that if the ratepayers had a majority they would take care that these things would not exist?—Previous to the passing of the Local Government Act the directors took great care to make four new directors in order to give the majority to themselves.

30678. We know that. Is it your view that the majority of the directors should be representatives of the ratepayers?—Certainly; it is the ratepayers' directors who would have something to say, but the others have nothing to do with it, they have the guarantee.

30679. We are agreed, that is all I want to ask.

Examined by Mr. SERRIN.

30680. What do you say, Mr. Martin, about local rates for small quantities?—The rate from Sligo for sugar, take it by the bag on these sixty-three miles, would be 1s. 6d.

30681. Chairman.—Per cwt. 1.—It was two cwt. per bag.

30682. Mr. Serrin.—Yes?—The rate for three cwt. on their own line from Ballinamore to Garadine would be 10d. per two cwt. The rate for their own coal, which has lately been adjusted by the manager

of the railway, who has a great interest in the Arigna Mining Company, is 1s. a ton. That would work out at $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cwt. per one cwt. and a fraction over, and a fraction over $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cwt. per ton of coal from the Arigna coal mines. That would be that we pay twenty times as much for our sugar as for coal.

30683. How many times as much do you pay for carrying sugar a long distance?—We get it from Sligo at 15s. per ton.

30684. About a farthing per mile per two cwt. bag from Sligo?—About that.

30685. And then for the short distance it is 3d. a mile?—A fraction over 3d. a mile, tenpence for three miles. I can show you the receipts.

30686. It is a great disparity; you say, firstly, that the high rates for small quantities make the local trader?—They now cart the goods; they could not afford to pay their exorbitant charges.

30687. And that not only is the small scale high on the short distance, but the tonnage rate becomes prohibitive?—That is so.

30688. Do you wish to mention bacon?—I wish to mention something about the office in Dublin.

30689. Take the bacon, please?—I find the rate for bacon from Dublin is 24s. per ton, and the rate from Liverpool via Dublin to Ballinamore is 22s. 6d.; 8d. per ton less.

30690. The effect is to wipe out Dublin?—It is not fair to the Irish trade. They load it in Dublin 8d. per ton less than getting it from Dublin.

30691. And you can get it direct from Liverpool at 6d. a ton less?—No, that was a mistake; it was 6d. I can show you documentary proof.

30692. These, you say, are typical facts, and they indicate that the railway system is managed in a manner inimical to the interests of home trade?—That is so.

30693. Very well, do they refuse to weigh your goods?—They refused to give any weight or rate on coal.

30694. Do you mean they will not tell what weight they carry?—No; they give the amount in money. They say, there is the amount; and how they arrive at the amount they will not tell.

30695. This is an advice note for coal on the Carran and Leitrim Railway—it does not tell what weight is carried?—No, nor the rate.

30696. It does not tell the rate that is charged; it only tells the sum that is to be paid?—Yes.

30697. Lord Purvis.—Have you ever asked for the information?—Yes.

30698. Mr. Serrin.—If you want to know what the weight is and what the rate is you will not find them in the advice note, but have to go and ask the railway officials?—They will not give it. I got a wagon of coal weighed. I asked them to weigh at the railway weigh-bridge, which they did for a long time, and there were great complaints about shortage of coal, and I suspected I might have been something short too. I asked the manager would he weigh this wagon of coal for me, and he said yes, on the express condition that I would take no action against them company for shortage.

30699. A very prudent precaution?—It was weighed, and was 4 cwt. 3 qrs. short. I had to pay the carriage on that, and I had also to pay the money for the coal I did not receive.

30700. Mr. Serrin.—What station was that?—Ballinamore Station.

30701. Mr. Serrin.—When was that?—It was May, 1906, last year.

30702. Did you do what you could to obtain redress from the railway company?—I did.

30703. Did you fail?—I refused to pay on last wagon, except they would give the weight, and they proceeded as.

Oct. 17, 1901.

Mr. Michael Martin, Representative of the Ballinamore Rural District Council.

Complaint as to excessive local rates for sugar on the Carran and Leitrim Railway.

The excessive "small" rates charged.

Rates for bacon from Liverpool to Ballinamore, and the local rate, Dublin to Ballinamore, compared.

The Irish railway system managed to the prejudice of the home trade.

The issuing of advice notes without particulars of rate or weight on the Carran and Leitrim Railway.

Shortage of coal carried on the line complained of; unsuccessful appeal to company for redress.

Oct. 17, 1907.

Mr. Michael Martin,
Representative
of the
Ballinamore
Rural District
Council.

30703. And forced you to pay?—I refused to pay, and they proceeded to it.

30704. Was there a decree made against you?—It was on when I was coming up here, and I have heard since that I was decreed. I was coming to the Commission. The case was heard, and the decision was not given. I heard it was given next morning.

30705. Chairman.—Was the case defended?—Yes; I gave evidence, and put in the dockets. They would not give the weight nor the rate, only the amount of money.

30706. Lord Fieffe.—What Court was it?—The Quarterly Sessions, before Judge Drummond, The Ballinamore Quarter Sessions.

Action by the
Cavan and
Leitrim
Company
against persons
for freight on
wagon of coal.

30707. Mr. Stelfox.—The process against you was for the freight of a wagon of coal from Newry to Ballinamore not delivered to you—did you pay the whole amount?—They asked for the whole amount. And there was some sundry items, together with the amount, and I offered to pay for them, and they would not take it except I paid for the coal; and they would not give the weight or the rate.

30708. Did you ask them to weigh it before you took delivery?—I did.

30709. Did you weigh it after delivery?—They refused to weigh except I promised to take no proceedings, and I thought it no use its weighing, because they would say we gave you no weight. You can sue the Great Northern. We gave so much coal for so much money.

30710. How did you ascertain it was short?—On their own wagon weigh-bridge. The messenger admitted that it was 4 cwt. short. This was in May, 1906, on a previous occasion.

30711. Lord Fieffe.—That was not the case they said you for?—No, another.

30712. Mr. Stelfox.—Who weighed it?—He weighed it on condition that I took no proceedings, and I took no proceedings, when I promised, in that case.

30713. Chairman.—Is that a cut weigh-bridge?—It is a wagon weigh-bridge.

30714. It was weighed in the wagon?—Yes.

30715. Lord Fieffe.—You did not pay for the coal?—I did.

30716. Mr. Stelfox.—Although he ascertained that the weight was 4 cwt. short he billed you for the correct amount?—Previous to his weighing it he made me promise I would take no proceedings.

30717. And he insisted on charging you with 4 cwt. more than there was delivered?—He did, and I paid, because there is their receipt for it.

30718. Will you put it into the notes. Do you see any chance of escape except to knit up such holes into a national railway system, and remove the local guarantees?—No.

A railway
system the
only remedy
for relief of
local
guarantees.

Copy of the receipt headed in is subjoined—

CAVAN AND LEITHRIM RAILWAY COMPANY, LIMITED.

(184) ADVISE NOTE FOR COALS.

BALLINAMORE STATION,
21st day of August, 1907.

To Mr. Michael Martin,
The Hotel.

On behalf of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway Company, Limited, I beg to inform you that the following wagons, viz.—Nos. 9 and 14, arrived at this station from Newry, this day, at 4.35 p.m., 20/8/07, loaded with coals, consigned to you with the undermentioned charges, and to request you will have the goodness to have the coals unloaded therefrom, and removed within forty-eight hours from the above-mentioned time of arrival. I also beg to inform you that, if the said coals are not unloaded and removed within the period of forty-eight hours, as above-mentioned, demurrage will be incurred and charged upon each wagon detained under loading from the expiration of the above-

mentioned period of forty-eight hours, until the same be unloaded (Sundays, Good Friday, and Christmas Day being excepted), viz., 3s. per truck per day.

The Cavan and Leitrim Railway Company, Limited, reserve to themselves the right (after notice to the consignee, and without prejudice to the Company's right to recover any demurrage that may have been incurred) to unload wagons conveying coals or other minerals, or goods of the first class, etc., as above-mentioned, at the risk of the owner or consignee thereof, at any time after the expiration of forty-eight hours from the time of arrival, as above-mentioned, and to charge the expenses of so doing, together with any charges incurred for demurrage, and the subsequent charges for wharfage or storage until removed.

The company require all charges for carriage as well as any charge for demurrage, etc., to be paid before the coals are removed.

Charges now Due.

Railway Carriage,	£	2	0
Paid on,			
Total,	£	12	3

For the Cavan and Leitrim Railway Company, Limited

N.B.—When sending for the above-mentioned goods, please to send this notice, with the subject order for delivery, filled up in favour of the party to whom the goods are to be handed over.

The directors require all charges to be paid before the coals are removed.

To the Cavan and Leitrim Railway Co., Ltd.

Please deliver the above-mentioned coals to or bearer

(Signed),

Dated the day of 19

30719. Do you see any chance of escape for a district such as this, supplied with such railways, except to knit them up into a national system, and remove the local ratepayers?—I do not.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON FOR.

30720. One question with regard to the complaint as to the charge on 2 cwt. consignment of sugar for a distance of three miles—of course you are aware that in a short distance the cost of station and service terminals is just the same as in the case of a long distance. The railways are fairly entitled to charge something for station accommodation and loading and unloading?—They have what they call a scale.

30721. Quite so. That places the short distance and the long distance in the same position—the cost is exactly the same in the one case as the other, and I want to point out that when you come to distribute the station and service terminals for short carriage it seems to add very much more to the cost than when you come to add exactly the same charges for service and terminals for long distances, it works out at a very small percentage on the longer route?—We can coal it much cheaper than they charge. They charge twenty times more for sugar than for coal—the difference is fifteen to three miles, no matter how you take it.

30722. You know coal is carried in the lowest class, and sugar in class one, I think. It requires very careful handling, and loading and unloading, and covering, and all that?—It would be 4s. 2d. in the fifteen miles comparing it with the three miles for 19d.

30723. The very point you being before us, when you say you are charged 1s. 6d. for sixty-three miles—that bears out my contention that you are charged

the same station and service terminals, but they are distributed over a greater length. Is your particular case, as a short distance, it would mean a great addition?—This is a clear case, 10d for three miles. It would be at the rate of 4s. 8d for fifteen miles.

30734. Is does seem high, but that is the reason, that it is carried in that way, and involves careful handling.

30735. Mr. Seaton.—Is the wage twenty times as much as 10d?—Yes, twenty times.

30736. No difference in class would justify the difference in charge?—It would not be justified no matter how you scale it or class it.

Mr. Telford.—The difference cannot be twenty times as much. Could not he state what the rates are?

30737. Lord Pirrie.—You admit it is not twenty times as much?

Mr. Telford.—He has not given the figures?—(Witness).—I have given the figures. The rate for the coal for fifteen miles is 2s per ton, and the rate for the sugar is 10d (2 cwt) for three miles, and it works out at a fraction over 1½d per cwt, for sugar, and 1½d per mile per ton for coal.

Mr. Seaton.—You can prove anything by figures.

30738. Mr. Seaton.—Some things cannot be proved in any other way.

30739a. Chairman.—You have given the figures for what they are worth?—10d, for three miles will work out at a fraction over 1½d per cwt per mile.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—What weight of coal and sugar?—Two cwt. of sugar and a ton of coal.

30739a. Lord Pirrie.—Two cwt. of sugar and a ton of coal.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—Which is it?—A ton of coal and 2 cwt. of sugar. The rate per ton is 2s for coal for fifteen miles, and for three miles for sugar it is 10d, that is for the sugar 1½d.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—He is quite right. A ton of coal would be 1½d per mile, and sugar 2s 9d. It is about twenty-one times as much?—There was a question I heard in Mr. Seaton's evidence I would like to clear up, if you will allow me—perhaps he might not have known about it. It was with reference to advertising for contracts for coal for the company. These contracts have been advertised, and it was a man named Leyden, a neighbouring miner, tendered, and he succeeded in getting the contract, but it seems that his coal did not please the company—natural to expect they did not please, and everything was wrong—the fire went out and it would not be taken again, so there is no need for anyone to compete against themselves.

30739. Chairman.—What you say is, I suppose, that although they do advertise for tenders, practically there is only one tender. That is what you mean?—That is all.

30739. And that is Argyll colliery?—Yes.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—That is because the majority of the directors of the railway are directors of the mining company?—Yes.

30739a. Lord Pirrie.—That is his assumption.

Mr. E. O'NEILL CLARKE, C.E., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30739. You are County Surveyor of Leitrim?—Yes.

30739. Have you heard the evidence this morning?—I have only heard Mr. Martin's evidence. I got in when Mr. Smyth was concluding his evidence.

30739. We have had so many witnesses in connection with the railway that I do not propose to ask any questions upon it. All the figures which you put in your proof we have had already, and they are in the notes with reference to the traffic on the Carran and Leitrim Light Railway. If there was anything Mr. Martin has omitted in giving his evidence that you would like to mention, we will hear what you have got to say, but I do not propose to go over your proof?—Would you allow me to say that there are only a couple of points I really wish to bring before the Commission, and, as far as I have seen, no other witness has given them.

30739. Just mention the first point and we will soon tell you?—The first point is that the line—part of the line which is guaranteed by the County of Leitrim—is outside the county altogether.

30739a. We had that before.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—You complain of the incidence of the system of crediting profits between Carran and Carran?—That is the second point. The point is that Leitrim has to pay for 5½ miles of line which are outside the county.

30739. Chairman.—In Recommendation?—From Carran and 1½ miles in Roscommon.

30739a. Lord Pirrie.—They are very close to Leitrim.

30739. Chairman.—We have had that in evidence?—Carran pays for four miles less than the mileage in the county. The second point is as regards the division of profits between the two undertakings, No. 1 and No. 2. I say on account of the way the traffic runs—practically all towards the northern part of the line—that the portion in Carran is the portion which earns by far the greatest amount of money for its length, and that, therefore, in dividing up the profits Carran takes the lion's share. So much is that the case, that in some half years Leitrim appears to be worked at a loss, and is worked at a loss, while in Carran there is a very considerable amount of profit. I say that the traffic comes from Leitrim. It is the place where the money is earned, and yet the profit is taken from it and given to Carran.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—Because the usual course of traffic is northwards?—Yes. I think it is an unfortunate state of things.

30739. Chairman.—Does the rate vary in the districts in the area? Are the rates the same all over the area?

30739a. Mr. Seaton.—This calculation governs the measurement of the levy on the two districts?

30739. Chairman.—That is what I want to get out.

30739. Mr. Seaton.—You think that this valuation ought to be readjusted so as to treat the levy in a more equitable way between the two counties?—What I think is that the levy ought to be worked as a whole, and the profits distributed as a whole.

30739. And the levies as assessed between the two areas?—Yes. At present the area in Leitrim pays 1s in the pound, whereas in Carran it is something about 4d, I think.

30739. Chairman.—That is quite plain. That is a new point. You agreed with what the previous witness and other witnesses have said—that the directors and the ratepayers who guarantee the interest on the capital should be more fully represented on the board?—I do.

30739. And do you think that with better representation, or a majority on the board, and better management, the ratepayers might be relieved of considerable portion of this levy?—I think they might induce greater economy in working.

30739. If you increased the receipts or economized in working, in both cases the net profit would be increased and the levy on the district reduced?—That is so.

30739. You think that would be very likely to be brought about by directors representing the ratepayers than by directors representing the shareholders, who are guaranteed 5 per cent?—I think it is possible. I am not convinced of it.

30739. You are not convinced?—I am not convinced.

30739. You heard the evidence with regard to the directors being connected with the colliery?—I have read about that.

30739. Do you know anything about that?—It is a matter of general knowledge.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. Michael Martin, Representative of the Ballinacorney Rural District Council.

The method of phasing the contract for the coal supply for the Carran and Leitrim Railway.

Mr. E. O'Neill Clarke, C.E., County Surveyor, Leitrim.

Proposal for a readjustment of the Railway levy on the Leitrim and Carran districts.

An increase in the ratepayers representation on the Carran and Leitrim Railway Board urged.

The connection between the Board of the Railway Company and the Argyll Mining Company.

Oct. 17, 1907. 30754. Do you think it is in the interests or otherwise of the railway?—I think it is a thing that ought not to exist.

Mr. E. O'NEILL
Clarke, esq.,
County
Down
Lectric.

The connection
between the
Board of
the Railway
Company and
the Anglo-
Saxony
Company dis-
approved.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

30755. I see you have proposals as to immediate relief. About the Great Northern Railway—you say, Mr. Clarke, apart from the question of dividend on capital, there is behind the serious question of deficit on working expenses?—Yes.

30756. Would you wish to see railways that have got into this position taken into the public budget of railways and the locality relieved?—I did not quite catch that.

30757. Do you regard transit—facilities for transit of passengers and goods—as a question in which the whole country has an interest, or a question in which localities should incur special liability for transit in their own districts?—I think the whole country has an interest in the question of transit and development.

30758. And if the whole country is interested in efficient transit, although the degree of interest may not be the same, between different districts in regard to different lines, would not you say the whole country is interested in developing every part of it?—Yes.

30759. Would you think that the ugly predicament of this guaranteed line and also the question of further branches would be best dealt with by a public system of railways, as in Australia and other countries, where public resources, however available, could be employed in relieving localities and constructing necessary lines?—I do.

Examined by Colonel HURCHMANSON PIERCE.

30760. One question with regard to the table in

your proof. As to the disproportion in the amount credited out of profits to the two counties—have you ever made any representation to the Board of Works, or has the auditor ever called the attention of your County Council to the point? It seems a very hard case on the face of it, that County Leitrim is paying the lion's share and not getting the mouse's share of the profits?—It is a great hardship.

30761. Has the attention of the Board of Works been called to it?—The question as between the two counties was raised some years ago. It was before my time in the county—probably it will be twelve or fifteen years ago, and an inquiry was held by Sir Douglas Salmon for the Board.

30762. *Chairman*.—That is a long time ago!—It may be fifteen years ago.

30763. *Colonel Hutchinson PIERCE*.—What was the result? Was he in favour of any scheme being granted?—He made certain rules as regards terminal charges and some matters that were in dispute between the two counties—station times, and generally he adjourned on anything that was brought before him.

30764. Was the question of the proper allocation of profits between the two counties brought before him?—I think he decided that the accounts of the two undertakings—the receipts and expenditure—should be kept entirely separate; and that is done. That is what I complain of.

30765. Then with regard to the question of Eacemoss, which certainly derives some benefit, and pays nothing, has that matter ever been represented to the Board?—I do not think it was represented.

30766. And no representation has been made since that inquiry to the Board of Works?—No.

The Commission then adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FIFTY-FIRST PUBLIC SITTING—FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18TH, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTT, Bart., Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FINKE, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JEKILL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHESON FOR, C.B., Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH;

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary)

Colonel R. G. SEAMAN CRAWFORD, D.L., ASSISTED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

30767. Colonel Seaman Crawford, I think you are Deputy-Lieutenant for the County of Down?—Yes.

30768. And that you appear here on behalf of the Down County Council?—Yes, one of their representatives.

30769. Are you on the Council?—Yes, vice-chairman.

30770. You have been asked to come here?—Yes, delegated by the County Council as one of its delegates.

30771. What is the particular trade or industry of that county—principally agriculture?—Agriculture and merchandising, and there are passengers, of course, largely too.

30772. You only speak with reference to your own county?—That is all, sir.

30773. Now, with regard to the local goods rates in your county, do you consider them reasonable, or not?—Well, of course, there are always individual grievances; but as a general rule the complaints are not many.

30774. Do you think that the rates in operation are such as fairly develop the industries of the county?—Yes, fairly.

30775. Have you considered the question of through goods rates and their effect upon this country?—Of course, being, as it were, an amateur in that matter, and without having the privilege of knowing much about rates, I can only understand that there is a difference between the out-rate as compared with the in-rate.

30776. The export rates from this country to England as compared with the import rates from England to this country?—Yes. And if such is the fact I should be very freely of opinion that they should be at any rate equalised. Of course, being an Irishman, I should be in favour of the Irish side.

30777. That is to say, you would rather see the export rates lower than the import rates?—Yes, if anything. But I think that they ought at any rate to be put on the same basis.

30778. You are of opinion that the low import rates which we have heard so much about are not fair and reasonable as regards Irish industries?—No; they are calculated to cripple trade.

30779. With regard to the passenger fares, have you anything to say in reference to them?—Of course we would all like to travel as cheaply as possible; but, I think, as a rule, there has not been much complaint of them. I know in the County Down the rates of the line, of which I have more knowledge than any other—its rates, and its excursion rates especially, are very low and satisfactory.

30780. Have you considered whether reductions in the existing rates and fares—rates for goods and fares for passengers—would have a tendency to increase the prosperity of this country generally?—Beyond that again, sir.

30781. Whether reductions in the existing rates for goods and fares for passengers would be likely to produce an increase of traffic and thus benefit this country?—The question that I was considering in the proof was the remunerative growth of traffic.

30782. Of course I am putting my question?—Yes; to your question I would certainly say yes.

30783. That is what we would expect?—To your question, certainly.

30784. Of course, as to how that is to be done, is another matter?—Yes.

30785. And that is the question you would like to refer to?—Yes.

30786. Then I gather that, speaking for your own county, you consider that the train services and the passenger fares and the goods rates are on the whole fairly satisfactory?—Yes, fairly satisfactory.

30787. Are you in favour in case—I am putting a hypothetical question—but, in case the railway passenger fares and goods rates were considerably reduced, and the railway companies for the time being had to bear a considerable loss, would you be in favour of a subsidy being given to the railways from the Treasury?—Of course, as a general rule, my experience has been rather opposed to subsidies, but I think that would be a fair one. The companies should not be expected to bear the loss, but the subsidy should not be made a permanent subsidy, at any rate at first, but might be given as an experiment to see what the effect would be.

30788. Have you considered how that subsidy should be given—by what authority?—I think in that case, as a case of experiment in the first instance, it ought to be given by the Imperial authority.

30789. I suppose there are portions of your county that are not served by railways?—Yes.

30790. Do you consider that motor services might be advantageously employed there?—Well, the motor question is rather not settled in my portion of the county. In my own knowledge, and in connection with the County Down Railway, two motor services have been tried, one from Newcastle to Killybeg, which is about thirteen miles.

30791. Newcastle is on the coast?—Yes. That one is still in operation; but I am given to understand that it just pays its way.

30792. The motor service?—Yes.

30793. Run by the railway company?—Yes. The other one run by the railway company is from Newtownards to Portaferry, on the other side of Strangford Lough, along that long peninsula where there is no railway communication. That was in operation for some little time, but has been given up, I believe from my own knowledge, because it didn't pay.

30794. That was a railway connection?—Yes.

30795. What railway?—The Belfast and County Down Company. Both these services were started by the County Down Railway Company.

30796. I suppose you have heard or know that we have Railway Commissioners to settle disputes between the railway companies and the public—the Railway Commission Court?—Yes.

30797. Do you think that is a satisfactory tribunal to settle differences in Ireland?—Fortunately for myself, I have had no personal experience of it; but from what I have heard other people say, it is really impracticable for the ordinary person on account of the great expenses that attend it.

Oct. 18, 1906.

Colonel R. G.

Seaman

Crawford, D.L.,

Representative

of the

Down

County

Council.

The train

services and

rates and

fares in the

County Down

are fairly

satisfactory.

The necessity

for a Govern-

ment subsidy

to the rail-

ways if rates

and fares were

completely

reduced.

Experimental

motor services

in the County

Down.

The great

expense

attached to

proceedings

before the

Railway and

Canal Com-

missioners Court.

Oct. 18, 1867.

Colonel R. G. Shannon
Crawford, B.L.,
Representative of the
Down
County
Council.

Suggested
Irish tribunal
to deal with
cases of
dispute to
replace the
Railway and
Canal Com-
missioners.

An expert
Investigator
preferred to a
County Court
Judge

The procedure
of the Rail-
way and
Canal Com-
missioners to
behave for the
expense of
litigation

This expense
detains traders
from seeking
redress from
the railway
companies

30798. Have you any alternative suggestion to make from your Council?—Well, of course, it is such a very big question. Naturally myself and others would wish to see some cheaper tribunal appointed for the purpose of arbitrating between the traders and the railway companies.

30799. Have you considered whether the county court judges could be used for that purpose?—Personally, I would sooner not for a very strong reason. I would sooner see a higher authority than the county court judges. The county court judges are very busy men; and, personally, I would sooner see a higher authority than the county court judge.

30800. An authority as high in position as the present Railway Commissioners' Court?—Yes.

30801. What difference would it make?—Of course there is great expense. A small court of something of that kind—we are talking about Ireland—should be supplied for Ireland alone that would have its headquarters in Dublin. Unimportant questions could be heard in other parts of the country. It is for the purpose of reducing the expense that such a thing should be done.

30802. Would you suggest that it should be a court in Dublin?—I say the headquarters should be in Dublin.

30803. With authority to move about?—In smaller cases they should have authority to send one of their body, or an inspector, or somebody of that kind, to investigate the matter on the spot, if it was only a small matter, and report on it in Dublin.

30804. Why not a county court judge?—Well, I would sooner have somebody else. If there was to be a permanent body it would be better to have an official of some kind, whose duty would be of that nature, and who would have technical knowledge. A county court judge might have legal experience; but these little differences in railway matters are matters more for common sense in many cases than legal matters. Also I think that it is necessary that the official should be independent of every influence, and should be specially for that purpose.

30805. You idea being that the bulk of the cases would not involve legal questions at all, but simple questions of dispute between the trading public and the railways?—Yes; that was my idea.

Examined by Mr. SHANNON

30806. Before putting any question to you, Colonel Shannon Crawford, may I say, as an Irishman, that I think any Commission of this kind ought to be glad to consult on questions of this character one who bears a name so honored in the annals of Irish reform. Now, as to the matter of litigation, have you any doubt that companies, having for the purposes of litigation unlimited command of funds, can always keep individual complainants out of any court by dictating a high scale of expenses?—By the companies dictating?

30807. Yes; in the scale of legal expenses?—My experience, and from what I have heard, is not so much the companies dictating, but the procedure of the court that has made the expense so heavy for the individual. I don't say that it is the railway companies that did it. Any corporation having funds at its disposal is better able to fight, and can spend more money than the individual. But I think it is wrong procedure which is the basis of the whole thing.

30808. If, suggestion is, that no matter what the court may be, if you bring a company into any court to bring legal compulsion to bear upon its interests, and if you are an individual trader with only your private income, the contest is extremely unequal between the company and the individual?—I think that applies, not only to railways, but to all kinds of business. The individual always suffers at the hands of the corporation.

30809. No doubt. But the railway companies apply themselves with special energy and with little regard for costs to cases in which the principles of their method of earning an income are questioned?—I think they use every means at their disposal. I would not condemn them for it. I think they are probably right to do so.

30810. I am not questioning their right. I am only suggesting that individual traders will rather suffer grievances than enter into litigation in which the costs may be ruinous?—Exactly so; certainly.

30811. You are, as a general rule, opposed to sub-

sidue?—In most things I am, as not tending to bring the best out of whatever object the subsidy is given to. If they think it is a permanent subsidy, they don't make their best effort. I think it tends in that way to make them lazy in the work of carrying out their object.

30812. Any subsidy given in this case would have to be paid out of the balance of Irish revenue, after paying existing charges?—Yes; I suppose so.

30813. Do you not think that if we were to start this movement for relief of the public by intimation that a charge on the public purse would be indispensable, we should greatly injure the prospect of success?—Would you repeat that?

30814. If we were to start this movement for relief of the public?—By the subsidy question?

30815. For reduction of rates and fares by intimating that a charge upon the public purse would be indispensable, considering the many other urgent claims upon the Irish revenue, should we not injure our prospect of success?—You mean of getting the money?

30816. Our prospect of getting anything done; if we said we must have money from the public purse to do it. Should you not think there would be a better prospect of success if you tried to do it without making a claim upon the public purse?—Oh, I think so; the Treasury would stop you.

30817. And the other claimants?—Yes, and the other claimants.

30818. But suppose you got subsidies, do you think, considering the complication and intricacy of the railway system, that you could really test whether value was properly given?—Test the value?

30819. Yes. Whether value was really given by the companies in reductions?—Well, I would hardly like to say; I could not say.

30820. It would be very difficult?—Very difficult.

30821. The railway companies are corporations with exceedingly skilful and energetic agents, and public departments, especially British public departments, in Irish matters of this kind, are apt to be a little drowsy. Are they not?—Yes, slow.

30822. That, perhaps, is a more appropriate phrase. Well, in that case, a slow department investigating into the affairs of such able corporations would scarcely be likely to satisfy the public that value was really given?—No; I suppose it would hardly.

30823. Well, there is another objection, and I am putting these objections to you as likely to be made, and, therefore, proper to be considered in advance—if you give subsidies the subsidies will be given in respect of the traffic which is most in need of development. Would it be a good thing to deaden the interest of the railway companies in that very traffic by paying them subsidies in respect of it? You see, if the railway company is paid a subsidy in respect of a particular traffic, then if the traffic should develop, though not as much as would cover the subsidy, the subsidy may be withdrawn, and the company may be at a loss; and would not the company prefer to keep the subsidy—a subsidy is so easily collected—rather than laboriously endeavor to develop traffic?—I suppose they would try to get their money as easily as possible, just as we all know that when they get a national guarantee, it never goes down, it always remains at the same rate; it is always there.

30824. The final effect would be rather to injure the development of traffic so far as the railways are concerned. You have described yourself as an amateur?—Yes.

30825. I may assure you are not directly concerned in trade?—Well, I have a good many mercantile pursuits as well.

30826. You are happily not in the position of those who have come here to give evidence, and whose income depends upon the purchase and sale of commodities carried by the railways?—No.

30827. Would you say that their evidence upon questions bearing on the effect of railway rates on trade is of the highest value?—Yes. Of course it is prejudicial in their interests. They look only at it from their own point of view and their particular business.

30828. Of course, it may be colored by their own personal interest. But you would admit that it is of the highest value in point of positive information?—Of course, yes.

30833. You have said that the failure of the railways to reduce their rates is due to want of trade?—Yes; I think it is recognized, I suppose, everywhere that the more you can carry the cheaper the rate you can carry it. If the business prosperity of this country were, by some miracle, doubled I think the question of rates would be settled. The rates would fall in proportion to the increase of the prosperity of the country.

30834. Obviously. The less the trade the less the income, and the less the income the less is it practicable to reduce rates?—Yes.

30835. I infer from what you say that you attribute the want of trade to the depopulation of the country?—Want of population and want of prosperity.

30836. What is the cause of the depopulation?—Want of prosperity.

30837. Want of work?—Well, I think, want of manufactures, and want of protection in their industries.

30838. To put it in the simplest form—want of remunerative work for the people of the country?—Yes; I suppose so.

30839. You observe, of course, the immense development in recent years of the import of food stuffs to Great Britain from abroad?—Yes.

30840. And Great Britain is, of course, the principal market of Ireland for the sale of food supplies. The development of the trade in food supplies from abroad to Great Britain has, of course, had the effect of restricting the export of food supplies from Ireland?—Yes.

30841. Now, when you find that the food supplies from abroad are carried into England upon a low scale of through rates, and when you find that the export trade from Ireland to Great Britain is conducted upon a higher scale of export rates, is it not plain that that system has had the effect of restricting, and does restrict and hamper, the staple industry of Ireland—the production of food?—Oh, certainly; it affects every industry. If that does exist, that is one of those things which ought certainly be remedied.

30842. You have spoken also of the want of manufactures. Are they not stagnant? Have they at all developed, except in one small part of Ireland? Is not Ireland, as a whole, a country destitute of manufactures?—Unfortunately, in other parts of the country than where I live.

30843. When you find that we import every year about sixty millions sterling in value, and that that vast import is carried into our country, and placed on sale in every town, upon a low system of through rates, and when you find that the Irish manufacturer who has to send his goods from place to place in Ireland is burdened by a high system of inland rates, does not that, in a great measure, account, to your mind, for the state of our manufactures?—Yes. I hold rather strong views on the land question, and I think the question of protection and free trade enters into this.

30844. If we ignore any question of protection, and consider the general effect of those two facts—low rates into Ireland, sweeping imported goods into the country, and high inland rates hampering the distribution of native-made goods—must not the effect be to hinder the endeavour to develop Irish manufactures?—It does, of course, hinder it. Of course the railways, I suppose, look at it from a point of view different to that from which we look at it.

30845. Exactly. It is not contended that a strictly commercial system of railways, looking to private and ignoring public benefit, is not suitable for an undeveloped country like Ireland, and that the system of railways which you find prevailing throughout the world (except in two or three countries)—a system owned by the public and worked by the public, would better suit this country?—I don't think so.

30846. At any rate, it would not develop the defects which I have pointed out to you?—But I think that those defects—and I agree with you that they are defects—could be removed in another way, by legislation on the subject.

30847. In what other way?—By giving this authority, this new Board that is talked of, or whatever department or agent of arbitration between the railways and the traders is formed—by giving it power to do something of that kind.

30848. But you knew that the railways at present have only a surplus of about half a million

profit to pay interest on some fourteen millions of Ordinary Stock, and if you reduce their rates and faces by compulsion you cut down their dividends and cut away the value of their stocks?—Yes.

30849. Would you be in favour of doing that?—No.

30850. What other way?—You have to come back upon the subsidy.

30851. On the subsidy. But I think you have admitted that subsidies would be objected to by the public, would diminish the prospect of success of any reform, and would deaden the interests of the railway companies themselves in the development of traffic. Well, I put it to you that the two chief aspects of the railway system in this country are high export rates from Ireland contrasted with low rates from the Continent, into England, and the low import rates into Ireland hampering the Irish manufacturer in the effort to distribute his goods in his own country. And now I would ask you, if depopulation has caused want of trade, and if want of trade makes it impossible to reduce the rates, are not the railways really suffering from the consequences of their own policy?—I don't think it is the railway companies' policy. I think the railway companies would be very glad to be able to lower their rates, if the unfortunate state of the country permitted it. It is not the fault of the railway companies.

30852. But the railway companies charge lower rates upon produce from the Continent, and impose higher rates upon produce sent of Ireland; the railway companies give lower rates upon imported manufactures into Ireland, and levy higher rates within the country on the Irish manufacturer, and I submit to you—and I think you have agreed—that these two features of railway administration have had the effect, first, of limiting the output of agricultural produce from Ireland into Great Britain, and, in the second place, preventing the Irish manufacturer from competing with the importer?—It has certainly. In all businesses they will carry large quantities of goods at a cheaper rate than small quantities. Where there are large quantities coming in and going out they will give a preferential tariff to the larger quantities as against the smaller.

30853. That is one incident of their commercial policy, and that is exactly one of the incidents which has fatally the country that has weak and straggling industries and small consignments?—Yes.

30854. You have said that it would be conducive to the proper development of the country that rates and fares in general should be put on a lower basis, and I suppose you would add especially those which affect particularly the interests of the country?—Which affect a particular district.

30855. Would you rather then, allow things to go on as they are going, giving foreign food produce the advantage—giving manufacturers of imported goods the means of keeping our manufactures down, and so allowing emigration from Ireland to continue. Would you, on general principles, be in favour of any plan which would give an assurance of such a reduction of rates and fares as would conduce to the proper development of the resources of the country?—Well, of course it would be very hard for me to say what the effect on the railway companies would be. But, personally, I think that the same effect could be produced by another Act, which we are not here to discuss to-day.

30856. If your mind was assured of these effects resulting from the adoption of any system, would you not think that a powerful argument in favour of it?—I think the railway companies ought not to be made to bear the loss.

30857. No, certainly not. But, if without inflicting any loss, you saw a prospect of such a reduction of rates and fares as would conduce to the proper development of the resources of the country, do you think that would be a powerful argument in favour of the adoption of that system?—It would have to be done by some power that would not affect the railways. You must not rob the railways nor individuals. I don't think you ought to compel the railways to carry on at a rate that would not be remunerative if it could be done by any other way that is possible.

30858. But suppose every interest of those whose capital is invested was fully and fairly considered?—Certainly it would make a difference, anything that

On 16, 1907.

Colonel R. G. Shawcross, Chairman, R.R. & D. Co., County Council.

Proposed creation of an authority that would accept responsibility for railway rates and the granting of subsidies where necessary.

The railway companies are not blamed for the excessive rates charged.

Preferential rates for large quantities as against smaller quantities with the one special policy of the railways.

The necessity for safeguarding vested interests is very obvious of railway is often urged.

Oct. 18, 1907.
Colonel E. G.
Stewart,
Crested, n.e.,
Representative
of the
Down
County
Council.

No complaint
as regards the
County Down
Railway.

Interference
with the
present
system of
private
ownership of
railways
opposed to.

The absorption
of the
smaller
lines by the
greater
recommended.

Three railway
systems in
Ireland
suggested.

The conditions
in Ireland
different from
those in
Continental
countries
where State
ownership of
railways
prevails.

would bring low rates. If there was the happy millennium, and that you could carry the goods for nothing, that would be a very good thing.

Examined by MR. ACHESON.

30854. I gather from your evidence that, so far as the County Down Railway is concerned, there is not much to complain of—No.

30855. The result is not perfect in the County of Down, but you don't grumble much?—No.

30856. Are you inclined to extend that view to the railways generally, or do you mean to confine it to that particular company?—Well, my own observation is that all the three railways running out of Belfast are in a prosperous and satisfactory condition as far as railways go.

30857. You don't wish to be carried beyond your depth, but, as far as your knowledge and experience goes, things are as well as can be expected—is that what it comes to?—I would say they are as well managed as any railway in Great Britain.

30858. You say you are not in favour of the amalgamation of the Irish railway companies into one company, or into two or three systems?—No, I am not.

30859. I take it that you are not opposed to the absorption by the larger of the little, trading lines?—Yes. I don't see of what advantage it would be to interfere with the railways that are going on fairly satisfactorily and paying fair dividends, but I think it would be an advantage if the weak railways that are not paying were amalgamated with the stronger lines.

30860. Are you prepared to offer any evidence as to how that should be done?—No.

30861. Your view is that you would have five or six or more good-sized railways as they are?—I would not like to mention any number of railways.

30862. The three railways that you have mentioned are the Great Northern, the Great Southern and the Midland?—Yes; that is my idea.

30863. And, as to State purchase, you are opposed to it?—Yes.

30864. I won't ask you to enlarge on that?—I am not a bigot on the subject, but I speak from my own knowledge of business affairs. There are three ways of managing a business, and, from my own experience, I look on a private company as being the most economical and probably the best. When it merges into a public company you generally find that it is more expensive and that the dividends are not so big as when the business is in the hands of a private company, and there is still more extravagance when it merges into the hands of a corporation.

30865. You mean that the thing is better in private hands?—A private limited company.

30866. A private company is, you say, more economical than a public company with outside shares?—Shares quoted on the Stock Exchange? A public company is not so economically managed as the other, and there is less responsibility to anybody; and a corporation is the most extravagant.

30867. Is that your view as a general proposition applying to any country?—Yes.

30868. Would you think that Ireland would be exempt from that difficulty?—I should not say that Ireland, from its geographical position and from the unfortunate state in which it is at present, from its want of population and manufactures, differs so much from other countries which have State-managed railways, such as Germany and France. Everyone who has travelled there knows that the German railways are largely held by the Government—and must be held—for strategic purposes. In France it is the same. Ireland has nothing but its own traffic, it has no through traffic; and there is the want of population. I have seen Ireland compared to Belgium, but I don't think there is any comparison between the two countries. I was at Oshes the other day, and I would say that Belgium is the Clapham Junction of Europe, where you see trains starting after train, and trains going to St. Petersburg, Constantinople, Vienna and other places, and goods all carried through—a booming population and large business. If Ireland were in that position all her difficulties would be ended.

30869. That will be so when you get a through connection to Canada?

30869A. Lord Pirrie.—To Blackdog Bay.

30870. Mr. Acheson (to witness).—That leads me to ask you another question. We all know that the population of Ireland has steadily gone back for the last forty years. We have had a good many witnesses here who seemed to think that things have touched bottom, and that Ireland was going to develop considerably. What is your view? We have heard of manufacturers being started and going to be started with considerable hopes of success. Have you any general view on the subject?—Well, of course, I don't like to go into the question of politics; but I think the question of politics and the present state of uncertainty in every business is in fact driving capital out of the country. I believe that Ireland under other circumstances would improve, it is improving in the agricultural part of it. I am a good deal engaged in agriculture myself. I am a large farmer myself.

30871. In the County of Down?—In the County of Down—yes. I farm about 2,500 acres.

30872. In your own hands?—Yes; and as Chairman of the Royal Ulster Association I have seen a very great improvement, not only in the breed of animals, but in the prosperity of the farmers. They are making more money than what they have done on account of what the Department has done. A milkman in the County of Down, a tenant of my own, living near me, told me that he has had large orders to send out oatmeal to America.

30873. Ireland used to export oatmeal?—It did.

30874. And then it took to importing it?—Because it didn't pay.

30875. And now it has taken to exporting it again?—Last week that milkman told me that he had got orders to send oatmeal to America.

30876. Then, may I take it to be your view that Ireland is looking up?—If it was allowed to.

30877. Are you inclined to prophesy that it will be allowed?—I cannot say.

30878. Chairman.—You have stated that as far as agriculture is concerned there is a decided improvement?—A decided improvement.

30879. Mr. Acheson.—Do you think there is a tendency to pull together in that direction?—In what way?

30880. In the direction of developing the resources of the country?—As to agriculture—certainly.

30881. You would not put it beyond that?—I say because of the uncertainty—if we could see what the future was going to be. I know that capital is hindered from being invested.

30882. You have spoken of capital?—I am Chairman of the Board of Superintendence of the Belfast Bank. There is also a Board of Directors; and the Board of Superintendence is a sort of a watchdog over them. I am its chairman, and I know that there is still money in the country. At the annual meeting the other day the balance sheet showed that deposits had increased by half a million in the year, and that during the previous ten years they had only increased by a million. What I mean by uncertainty is, that the money is in the country and ready to be used, but that people are frightened.

30883. The deposits have increased by half a million so what—that is the total?—About two and a half millions.

30884. Has your attention been directed to figures which show that during the last two years Ireland has imported more than she exported and is therefore a creditor country?—Yes.

30885. That means that Ireland has money for investment which it sends out of the country?—Yes.

30886. Do you think, that granting your postulate of a more settled state of things, there is an opening for investing that money satisfactorily in the country?—Certainly.

30887. You think there is an opening?—There would be an opening.

30888. Not only as regards agriculture but manufactures?—Yes.

30889. You used the phrase "want of protection." We must not talk of tariff reform, but I want to ask you this: when you used that phrase were you meaning protection for the United Kingdom against foreign countries, or protection and assistance for Irish industries, which are in competition with English?—No; I should like to see protection being equally given to England and Ireland.

30890. Chairman.—I think we had better drop this.

Witness.—I don't mean to foster either country at the expense of the other.

30030. Mr. Jervis.—You know, I daresay, that at present, by Act of Parliament, a railway is forbidden to give a preference in its rates, whether it be to foreign produce over that of the United Kingdom, or to that of the United Kingdom over foreign?—Yes.

30031. You know that?—I have heard so.

30032. You don't approve of it?—No.

30033. You think that railways ought to give a preference to United Kingdom produce?—I think so.

30034. At present it is illegal, and therefore the railway companies can't be blamed for not doing what the law says they shan't do. One other question I want to ask, and that is with reference to the Railway Commission question. Is it quite clear that if you have a question of a rate before the Commission it affects your one particular rate?—Yes.

30035. On the other hand, with the railway company it is a procedure that may affect a thousand rates of 25 each?—Yes.

30036. Then, the railway company has a much greater interest in the matter than you have?—Yes.

30037. And will be all the more inclined to spend money about it?—Yes.

30038. In the long run it will be a case of big battalions in the matter of money. Do you see any way out of it?—It doesn't apply to railway companies alone, but to all trading bodies, where there is the question of big battalions. Where a corporation are spending other people's money they are not so careful of it as they would be of their own.

30039. You don't see any way out of it?—No.

30040. Supposing that the Government were a big shareholder, what would you say to that? I daresay you know that in some countries the Government is a large shareholder?—Yes.

30041. Would you object to the Government being a shareholder?—No; but I would object to the Government being prepared to take a lower rate of dividend than I would expect to get myself if the Government were not in it.

30042. Clearly, if the Government and you were alongside you would not be satisfied; but if the Government were to be the deferred shareholder, and were to put your ordinary shares in the front, and were willing to take a lower rate of dividend, would you see any objection to that?—Certainly not, if you put it that way.

30043. It would avoid your difficulty as to direct Government management, for it would still leave the company in existence?—Yes.

30044. You would not object to it?—I don't see any objection at the present moment.

30045. You say that the establishment of a motor service would be of use?—I certainly think it would be of use, but we know that motors, up to this, have not been satisfactory. I think that if motor service had been found to be satisfactory private enterprise would have started some; but we have not had a single instance of private enterprise. I give you instances of two motor services, one of which is just paying its way, and the other has failed.

30046. They belong to the County Down Railway?—Yes.

30047. Lord Perceval.—Was not the service at Portlerry a traction engine one?—I believe they had both a traction engine and a motor service. They tried both on the Portlerry route. I think a motor service would be of great benefit to the country everywhere, but where you have to pay the individual who runs it, that is another question. I would like to see motor service extended; but I should be very sorry myself to start a company to run it, except as a philanthropist.

30048. You included both goods and passengers?—There were no passengers.

30049. The ones you referred to were for goods?—They were both for goods.

30050. You would have passengers if it could be made to pay?—Yes, but it is a problematical thing. In London I see that they are doing away with motor omnibuses, and if they cannot be made to pay in London they would hardly pay on a country road.

30051. You could hardly hope to get the same rate as low as they are in London. We had evidence of one case in which a motor service was started by a railway company, but the people would not support it because it was taking the load out of the mouths of the existing carriers?—Yes, there was

30052. And they had to give it up—the staff was there, but the people would not send it?—No.

30053. Do you think there would be serious results in that way?—Yes, I think that might happen. There is another point also which enters into it. I quote the County Down Railway again. Some years ago they started a specially low rate for small parcels of eggs and butter, and manufactured beans to send the things to market at very low rates, and it was a failure. I talked to several people about it, and the curious part of it was, that in Ireland the fair day is a very important day, and a great many people preferred to have an opportunity of going to the fair, and of taking their butter up in their own baskets to Belfast.

30054. Talking of agricultural development, having regard to the very large disparity between the traffic of Ireland and the traffic of Great Britain, do you think it a desirable thing to encourage traffic in small parcels, or would you concentrate the traffic and make it a wholesale business, done in a whole sale manner?—Do you mean by co-operation?

30055. I don't care how it is done. We have had evidence of parcel post facilities, and of facilities for 28 lbs. of butter from Limerick to local consumers in Cambridge, or something of that kind, do you consider that it would be desirable to encourage that sort of thing, or should all the support be given to wholesale business and large commercial sales?—Well, I myself would be a good deal in favour of co-operation. The small people might be helped in the way you suggest, but the consignments of large sections can be handled in bulk.

30056. Having small producers, and supposing the existence of a public organisation to help them, would you help these to dispose of their goods to the consumers in small quantities, or by co-operation to do the thing wholesale?—Personally, I should be in favour of co-operation.

30057. Mr. Seaton.—Ireland imports much more than she exports, and has to pay, therefore, in respect of her external trade, much more than she receives from it—does not that make her a debtor country, and the others the creditor countries?—I think myself that debtor as the more correct word.

Mr. Jervis.—England imports very much more than she exports, and we call her a large creditor country.

Mr. Seaton.—If you have to pay to other countries more than they owe to you, does not that make you a debtor to those countries?

Mr. Jervis.—Yes. But I am calling attention to the fact that Ireland does in a small way what the United Kingdom does in a large way—namely, only exports a low value of commodities in payment for a greater value of commodities which she receives in imports.

Mr. Seaton.—We have to pay more to other countries than we receive from them, and that makes us their debtors.

Witness.—Yes, certainly.

Examined by Colonel HENDERSON Post.

30058. Isn't the whole question of determining what would be fair rates for this country dependent on the volume of consignments, so to speak?—Yes.

30059. And on the conditions under which the traffic of the country is carried out?—Yes.

30060. And your experience of this country and of England is, that instead of being wholesale the traffic is very largely retail?—Yes.

30061. That in spite of the facilities that are offered by English and Irish railway companies if only agricultural and other traders are prepared to assist one another by sending their traffic in large consignments, the experience of the English railway companies is, that it rarely comes out of a hundred they cannot get the traders to take advantage of those low rates?—Yes.

30062. We are all agreed that low rates, especially for agricultural products, would be of the greatest benefit to this country, would any reduction of rates, in your opinion, lead to a development of traffic on the railways, and consequently to a lessening of the working expenses of the railways, unless the present conditions under which the trade of the country is carried on were very much altered?—I don't think it would.

Oct. 16, 1907.

Colonel R. G. Henderson, C.M.G., M.P., Representative of the Down County Council.

Unsuccessful experiment by the County Down Railway Company as to low rates for produce in small quantities.

Co-operation amongst traders and agriculturists as to transport of larger consignments suggested.

Ireland's imports much larger than her exports.

The traffic of Irish railways consists principally of small consignments.

An alteration in the conditions of Irish trade as well as lower railway rates required.

Oct 18, 1897.

Colonel R. O.
Barnard,
Governor, O.M.,
Representative
of the
Down
County
Council.

Increase in
the weight of
consequences,
a necessary
condition to a
reduction in
rates.

Proposed new
railway from
Newtownards
to Fintona

Suggested
abolition of
the recom-
mendation of
the Allport
Commission,
as to a
substitute for
the existing
Railway and
Canal Com-
mission.

Continuation
of the
proposed new
line.

The recom-
mendation of
the Allport
Commission
as to amalga-
mation of the
Irish lines
under one
company.

30023 Is instituting any comparison between the high export rates that you allege are charged with regard to the carriage of food products from Ireland into England as against the low rates on foreign products coming into England, isn't it necessary to study the conditions under which the two traffic are carried on?—They must be reasonable.

30024 In the one case the foreign produce is sent in very large quantities, and at stated intervals, and that enables the railway companies to give specially low rates. Those rates have been offered and could be given—and it would be for the advantage of the railway companies to give them—if the traffic was sent from this country under similar conditions?—If they had a guarantee as to quantity.

30025 The cost of working to the railway company is largely in proportion to the amount of dead weight carried; and if you ran your carriages and wagons half full it naturally follows that the proportion of dead weight is very great?—Yes.

30026 I gather that your experience of motor service—at any rate in the North of Ireland—is not so encouraging as to favour any further extension of light railways in that part of the country?—No; I think the responsibility of making them a financial success would hinder them. But it would be a great advantage to the country. That particular district that I speak of—seventeen miles from Newtownards to Portlerry—is not supplied by a railway of any kind.

30027 Is it fairly prosperous?—It is one of the best parts of the land. Agriculture is very good there.

30028 If in a populous and prosperous district such as that, motor service, especially motor service for goods, has been unremunerative, it would not hold out a tempting prospect for the extension of light railways there?—Certainly not, financially.

30029 We have had a good deal of evidence as to want of facilities in North Tyrone; is there need of further railway extension in that direction?—As far as I am concerned, it is the County of Down.

30030 But in the County of Tyrone?—As to the County of Tyrone, I don't answer. The County of Down, I think, is fairly well served.

30031 As to the Railway and Canal Commission, and the expense of attending it, I desire you know that that subject has been required into by different Commissions, and, amongst others, by the Allport Commission, which reported twenty years ago, and their recommendation was that there should be three or four business men, representatives as far as possible, of different parts of the country, and with them should be associated one Government representative; that that Commission should be a lay Commission, but empowered to call in legal assistance if they required it; and that they should deal with all the complaints that now come before the Railway and Canal Commission. They should be given regulatory powers if their decisions were not obeyed. Would you be in favour of some such body as that?—Would the two parties have to go from Ireland to England?

30032 No, the idea was that there should be four of the best business men in Ireland, each representative of a district as far as possible, not paid very high salaries; that they should go about the country; and that they should call in legal assistance and advice on such points as they were not competent to decide—in other words, that counsel should be called in if necessary; would you be in favour of such a body as that?—Yes; I think it would be of great use.

30033 I gather that though you are opposed to nationalisation and State purchase, you would not be altogether so reluctant to have amalgamation if it could be carried out on satisfactory terms—in that your view?—Well, it is not so much a question of terms. It would be a great advantage to the country if the weak lines could be amalgamated with the strong ones, but I am afraid the former would not be so well served.

30034 The Allport Commission recommended that there should be amalgamation of the lines in the hands of one large railway company. We need not go into the composition of that company; but the management should be as at present, private management, accompanied by some style of Government control, which would regulate the rates and charges; and in return for that the Government would give a subsidy, or guarantee for a certain period to recoup the shareholders of the

needed system against any possible loss from the reduction of rates and fares. That would be a regulation of the commercial element, which I think, you favour on business principles?—Yes.

30035 But subject to control and supervision as regards the giving by the companies of reductions in their rates and charges?—And being subsidised.

30036 You can put it in two ways. You don't like the term "subsidy." In 1896—ten years ago—Mr. Childers, a man of great ability, thought that, quite apart from any claims that we had on England for the restoration of public money, a grant of money might be expended in the consolidation of the existing railways, and in paying off the charges that are at present bearing interest at 5½, 4, and 4½ per cent, at a lower rate of interest, and that that economy could go towards making reductions in rates and fares. That, again, would require special legislation. I would say "yes" if you did not limit it to Ireland. I don't see why Ireland should be treated differently from England.

30036A Mr. Stenton—Because Ireland has been overtaxed.

Without—Not the individuals. You open the question of taxation again; I rather dispute that. I would like to say that as an individual I found myself much higher taxed in England than when I lived in Ireland.

30037 I don't want to follow that up; but you can hardly compare the conditions under which we live in this country with those in England and Scotland?—But the system that is good for the English and Scotch railways would be good for those of Ireland.

30038 Even the good lines in this country have not enough of traffic. You say that you don't see any prospect in the immediate future—though it may come in twenty or thirty years—of any great agricultural development; reductions could not lead in one year to any great development; therefore, whatever system takes hold of the railways there must be some loss incurred by someone?—Yes.

30039 For some time; and to meet that loss wouldn't you think it desirable—I gather that you do think it desirable that the charges should be reduced, and to meet that loss which might be incurred would you see any great objection to the State giving us a grant?—I don't call it a subsidy—to be expended in the direction you mention?—To my mind it is the only method by which it could be done.

30040 Now, one other question. Do you consider that the introduction of the Midland Company of England into the North of Ireland has been for the benefit of that district?—Well, I don't know much about the traffic. The only thing I know about it is, that it has increased immensely what I call the holiday people. The tourist traffic has increased immensely by the Midland Company running particular excursions to Ireland. I know personally that it has been of great benefit in that way, and the means of bringing money into the country; and I have heard of no grievance.

30041 We have had a good deal of evidence as to the subject—some for and some against the coming of the English companies?—I only know that it has brought a lot of money into the country.

30042 Is your view that it has conduced to the prosperity of the country?—Yes.

Examined by LORD FINLAY.

30043 We are glad that you have had that half-million of deposits in the bank that you keep such a close watch over; but would you not think that these increased deposits have arisen from the profit of the manufacturers in Belfast who deal with the bank, and that it shows that they have no feeling of want of faith in the future or uncertainty—has the linen and flax trade ever been in so prosperous a condition as it is at present?—I believe it is; but I don't think those deposits came so much from the big people. The deposits have increased over the whole system. I think a large proportion of the deposits come from the agricultural people.

30044 Then it is their profits that they deposit?—And which they would have invested if they had had more confidence in the present state of affairs. The deposits would not have been there if they had had another outlet for them.

30645. Then you don't admit that it has been the increased profits that have given you the deposits, for you find the same thing in every bank in the United Kingdom—whether in Lancashire or Belfast—and I was extremely gratified to hear that you received half a million of money in deposits in excess of the previous year; surely you must admit that it was owing to the profits of business?—Yes; and I think the people have been making money in the North of Ireland, not only this year, I am glad to say, but last year. The deposits would have increased in a certain proportion, but they have increased in an undue proportion; and, under ordinary circumstances, I don't think the money would have been there, for the Northern people would have looked for higher interest.

30646. Have you in the past year had greater expenditure in the linen industry than in former years?—I admit there has been.

30647. And an increase during the past year in all industrial work in the North of Ireland?—Yes.

30648. And during this increase, which has been larger than any during the last eight or ten years, your deposits increased by half a million?—Yes.

30649. Certainly that is most satisfactory?—Yes.

30650. And, instead of any feeling of uncertainty, doesn't it show great faith in the future—no matter what the industry was—that they have increased their deposits during that year by £500,000?—What I am trying to get out is this. The deposits do not come from the big people. The big linen manufacturers who make money builds a new mill—or he is, perhaps, putting his money into his mill. Harland and Wolff would put their money into their business. It is not the big people like them, but the small people that made the deposits.

30651. As Chairman of the Board of Superintendence of that important bank and as the watchdog of the directors, did you ever know of a large concern washing their money in deposits when they could invest it in other securities in their own city or elsewhere, and sell them out when they wished to do so?—That is the whole of my argument.

30652. Your argument is that the half-million came from the small customers?—Yes.

30653. They have not in many cases the advantage of knowing how to invest their money for six months or two years, and they naturally put it on deposit, and you take it as cheaply as you can?—Yes.

30654. But if the large manufacturers, who made considerably more, had put their money into your bank on deposit the amount would have been over a million, but they either invest outside or put their money into their business—aren't that the risks?—Oh, certainly I think they are quite right. It is not the big people. My contention is that the deposits have increased abnormally, and that we would not have had that increase but for the uncertainty.

30655. Then we agree; and it is very satisfactory for Belfast and for Ireland that you have been so prosperous, and that, in addition, the large concerns have been increasing their works considerably. Now we have stated that there were a great many businesses that were ready to increase but for a foreign worry—that they would have increased if there had been a feeling of security?—I am coming to a subject that you and I don't agree on—the tariff question comes in.

30656. No, I am keeping free from that; I want to clear your evidence. You have given evidence, from your knowledge as chairman of the body you have mentioned, that is most useful to us; and you say that it is not want of railway facilities—that's gratifying—but uncertainty and a feeling of insecurity that prevents investment of money. Are you not entitled to tell us more, or withdraw that part of your evidence?—I did not wish to make a detailed statement; but I know there are cases—and in my own case, in the business that I am connected with, there is a feeling of, I won't say insecurity, but of uncertainty from a business point of view.

30657. You agree that these industries, of which we have been speaking, have increased largely in the past year, and we have more money in our banks, and, therefore, we must be in a more secure position?—Yes.

30658. I take it your evidence is really evidence on behalf of the County Council; or is it merely prepared at the request of the County Council?—I was

selected with another delegate. I want to say I represent the County Council. I have not consulted any other member on the line of evidence, except that I believe the views I give coincide with those of the majority.

30659. Yes; but they are your own views?—Yes.

30660. You state you would like to see cheaper fares, but you don't see how it is to be done. You are largely interested in Belfast. I suppose you are aware that we have evidence from many people coming from other County Councils, saying that the difference between second and third class fares is a very serious matter in Ireland. Compared with England, there is a difference in second class fares over third, with the exception of one railway company, of sixty or eighty per cent. Are you in favour of a reduction in the difference between second and third fares, say, to twenty or thirty per cent?—I do you think the reduction would have a good result?—I think the question of rates, or things of that kind, are questions of management. I think the present fares are unsatisfactory; but I think the matter could be well left to the delegates to this new body, or be made a question of arbitration.

30661. Are you aware that the Belfast and County Down second class fares, for example, are something like sixty-eight per cent over the third class fares, whereas, on the Northern Counties they are only from thirty to forty per cent, on the case of second class fares over third?—That has been stated.

30662. Would not it be a good thing for the County Down to get the fares reduced to the same figure that they are in the County Antrim?—Of course.

30663. Then you would be in favour of that?—Yes, I am in favour of that; but I think it would be a matter of arbitration.

30664. But your County Council have not taken any steps to get cheaper fares for the farmers in the County Down, such as they have in the County Antrim?—The County Council have not taken any action.

30665. Now, you spoke about the motor service being unsatisfactory from Portlery to Newtownards?—Yes.

30666. Are you aware that on the other side of Lough Neagh the motor service was started four or five years ago, and that it was only stopped in the last few months between Monaghan and Cough, on account of the County Council refusing, or not being able to repair the road. Did the same thing take place in the County Down?—The road is a very good one and I don't believe the County Down railway ever approached us to put the road in a better state of repair.

30667. That is what I mean. The service was not taken off for the same reason?—No.

30668. You said very distinctly, I think, that a great many industries were injured for want of protection. I don't want to go into this, because the Chairman would not like me to do so, and I only want to ask you just this—If we had to pay more for the coal and iron we use in the production of our ships, and if the flax manufacturers had to pay more for their flax, would our industries be increased or decreased? You don't mean it, I suppose, in the sense that you want the employers—the manufacturers in Belfast or County Down—to pay more for what they purchase or bring into Ireland?—Oh, no; I put Ireland upon the same footing as England.

30669. You don't want them to pay more?—No; I don't want any protection for Ireland that England has not got.

30670. You don't want the manufacturers of Ireland to pay more for what they bring in to produce the manufactured article?—No.

Re-examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30671. You said, in your judgment—to use your own words—that the railways were State-owned upon the Continent principally for strategic reasons?—I stated that that entered largely into the reasons in Germany and in France, for instance.

30672. Of course we understand that—for military purposes, for instance?—Yes.

30673. Would you agree that, except for strategic purposes, it is better for the railways to be privately owned?—Yes, if properly managed. Take, for instance, France. Supposing the Government was financially pressed from other sources, the first thing

Oct. 15, 1907

Coloed R. O. Shannon
Quoted, p. 1,
Representative of the
Down
County
Council.

Views of the
witness
brought
to coincide with
those of
County
Council.

Suggested
reduction in
the cost of
second class
travelling.

The Port-
lery and
Newtownards
motor service.

The cessation
of motor
service in
some cases
due to the
condition of
the public
roads and the
refusal of the
County
Councils to
rebuild.

Proposed low
import duties
for raw
materials
recommended.

Private
ownership
of railways
to be preferable to
State ownership
of railways.

Oct 18, 1866.

Colonel R. G. O'Sullivan,
 Chairman,
 Commission,
 D. O. R.
 Representative
 of the
 Dues
 County
 Council.

The pro-
 perty of New
 Zealand under
 a system of
 State
 railways.

The con-
 dition in New
 Zealand not
 identical with
 those in
 Ireland.

Mr. E. H.
 Benson
 (Member
 Dues &
 County,
 Limerick).

Complaint as
 to excessive
 charges for
 small parcels
 by passenger
 trains.

Similar
 reduction to
 that made in
 the parcel
 post rates
 would

The trans-
 action of
 claims by the
 Post Office
 more liberal
 than by the
 railway
 companies.

the railway would be to starve the rail-
 ways, if they were pressed for ships or guns, or
 things like that.

30074. Have you read the evidence given before the
 Commission?—I have read some of it.

30075. Did you read the evidence of the Premier of
 New Zealand?—No.

30076. You know that New Zealand is a country
 with similar agricultural conditions to this country?
 —Yes.

30077. Do you know that the whole of the railways
 there are owned by the State?—Yes.

30078. Do you know Sir Joseph Ward told us that
 it was to the railways that the prosperity of New
 Zealand was indebted?—Yes.

30079. Did I mention that the population of New
 Zealand is one million?—Yes, that is the population.

30080. And it is four and a half millions in this
 country?—Yes.

30081. Have you any reason to believe that a
 similar condition would not be produced in this
 country as in New Zealand if the railways were State-
 owned?—I think there is a little difference between
 the two countries, and it is that. If Ireland had
 been a newly-discovered country, with no railways,
 then I think the State would be the persons to step
 in with the money and push forward the question of
 the establishment and control of the railways, and
 that they would be entitled to retain the control. But
 the railway companies being in existence makes a
 very different question. Private enterprise could not
 have done in Australia or New Zealand what they
 have done here. That is the difference I see.

30082. Of course to one would suggest that, what-
 ever argument was made, that any injustice should
 be done to the existing railways?—No, of course.

Mr. E. H. BENSON, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

30083. You are a member of the firm of Benson
 and Sons, of Limerick?—Yes.

30084. Is what particular industry is your firm
 engaged in?—Principally in sending butter and poultry
 and bacon to England, and direct to consumers—that
 is retail.

30085. Is your traffic principally sent by passenger
 train?—By passenger train and by parcels post.

30086. Small packages?—Yes.

30087. Never mind the parcels post, because we
 know those rates. With regard to the railway transit,
 have you anything to complain of from Limerick for
 your small parcels?—The way they carry them is all
 right, and the facilities they give, but the principal
 point in the proof of my evidence I have
 furnished is that, about eighteen months ago
 —in July last year—the parcels post re-
 duced their rates about twenty per cent., but
 the railway companies have made no reduction. I
 have written to the railway companies and interviewed
 their superintendents, and I have one of their letters
 here.

30088. Never mind that. Because the Government
 reduced the rates on the parcel post why do you
 suggest that the railway companies should do the
 same?—If the railway companies can afford to give
 the Government a reduction, why should they not
 also give the traders a reduction?

30089. Observe.—They do not. The Government
 under their own rates for the parcel post, and they
 tell the railway companies—I do not know whether I
 am not letting out a secret—that they will get a
 certain percentage of the gross receipts. That is
 what they do in England. I do not know whether it
 is the same here.

Mr. Fyfe.—It is the same in Ireland.

30090. Chairman (to Witness).—Why don't you see
 the parcel post?—We do. But that is limited to a
 certain weight. We almost always have large num-
 bers of parcels over that weight.

30091. Your only means of dealing with them is
 with the railways?—Yes.

30092. The only question is, are the rates charged
 at present fair and reasonable, taking all the circum-
 stances into consideration?—You must remember that
 the railway rates are higher than the parcels post
 rates, and that we have specially reduced rates at
 owner's risk. By that rate we run the risk, if the
 parcel is injured or delayed, or if the parcel is not
 delivered at all the railway company will tell us they

30093. Now, with regard to the light railways in
 Ireland; these small railways don't pay—you say
 they should be taken over by the larger companies?—
 I believe it would be to the general advantage.

30094. To the advantage of what?—Well, to the
 advantage of the working of the light railways I
 don't know whether it would bring in any additional
 money to the railway companies.

30095. You would pass a law compelling the large
 companies to take over these light railways?—I would
 not go so far as that.

30096. Then how do you mean it should be done?
 Well, I mean if it could be done. I was not looking
 at it from the railway point of view, but I think it
 would be advantageous to the railway companies, and
 to the shareholders, if the big companies took them
 over. The big companies might lose a little, but they
 would not feel it like the small ones, and they would
 run the lines for the better service of the country.

30097. Whether these railways be good or not, they
 are a great benefit to the districts?—Oh, certainly.

30098. And other districts in Ireland would be
 equally benefited by the construction of other light
 railways?—Certainly.

30099. And that private enterprise cannot do it?—
 Yes.

30100. Mr. Ansell.—We were just talking about the
 figures of imports and exports given by the Board of
 Agriculture returns. I have these figures now. The
 imports for 1864 were £55,250,000, and the exports
 £40,212,121, showing a balance of imports over ex-
 ports of over four millions. In 1865 the imports were
 £55,000,000, and the exports £51,331,350, showing a
 balance of three and three-quarter millions.

were carried at owners' risk, and therefore they are
 not liable. As we are circumstanced in Limerick we
 are generally able to get compensation. On the parcel
 post there are no such restrictions.

31001. Do you mean to say the Government is
 liable in any case for delay?—If we are at a loss
 through perishable goods.

31002. Answer that question, if you please. Do
 you mean to tell me that the Government, in any
 circumstance whatever pay compensation to the
 senders if traffic is delayed by parcels post?—We have
 got paid frequently.

31003. Could you give me a case?—I have not a case
 here.

31004. Of delay?—Where we have sent poultry and
 where they have been delayed a day. That is say-
 ping they ought to have been delivered to-day and
 were not delivered till to-morrow. In warm weather
 when they have been delayed so as to render them
 useless we have got compensation.

31005. From the Post Office?—Yes. And in all
 cases where parcels are lost we get compensation.

31006. I can understand compensation for lost par-
 cels, but for delay—you say so?—That does not often
 happen with regard to the parcels post.

31007. With regard to owner's risk rates, which
 you generally use, on the whole do you not get an
 advantage in carriage throughout the year on your
 traffic by using these lower rates than if you paid
 the higher rates and claimed compensation?—Yes.

31008. Therefore, it is a benefit to you to have
 these owner's risk rates?—Yes.

31009. The only point is, you think there are cases
 even with the owner's risk rate, where the carrier
 ought to be liable?—Yes.

31010. For instance, in the case of total loss?—We
 get compensation but that is a kind of compensa-
 tion to many cases.

31011. I understand you to say you get it
 in Limerick, because there is competition?—Yes.

31012. If there was no competition you would not
 get it?—In many cases we would not.

31013. On the whole, I think Mr. Benson, you are
 not here to make an indictment against the railway
 companies?—There is another point with regard
 to owner's risk. We send eggs, and honey, and
 some other things. The conditions are so stringent
 with the railway companies that we do very little
 in that line, because we cannot send these things at

owner's risk by the railways. But the parcels post will take these things, and put a label "fragile," on them. But the expense by parcels post is so very high that it practically kills the trade.

31014. I thought you said it was lower than the railway company's rate?—That is for small quantities, but in goods like these, where the packing has to be strong and wadded, it makes the cost on these so much extra that we cannot do anything hardly.

31015. Have you seen those boxes provided by the Agricultural Department for the transit of these things?—Yes. We use ~~the~~ boxes.

31016. Those are very light?—They are light.

31017. They would not add appreciably to the cost of transit?—Yes, but the railway companies will not take them at owner's risk, and give no kind of guarantee that the things would be delivered in good order.

31018. That is for eggs?—Eggs. Honey we send by post to England.

31019. That is, in fact?—In sections.

31020. Is there any other point in connection with the owner's risk rate?—Yes, with regard to the through rates to the North Staffordshire lines.

31021. We have had all this before. We know these are too rough rates.

Mr. Telford.—With the North Stafford and the North-Eastern.

31022. Chairman.—You think it would be an advantage if there were through rates?

Witness.—A very great improvement, because we have a great many customers there, and we have lost some customers because we have not been able to send the goods at through rates to Staffordshire.

Mr. Telford.—The North-Eastern rates are in process of being arranged to a certain extent.

Witness.—We have no complaint against that company.

31023. Lord Pirbright.—Have the North-Stafford railways approached the Irish railways?

Mr. Telford.—The subject is now before the Irish and English Traffic Conference.

31024. Chairman (to witness).—With regard to the amalgamation of Irish railways, would you favour the railways being united into one system, or more?—I would suggest three or four systems. I think one system would not deal fairly with Ireland all round. As far as my own experience goes, Limerick has been benefited by the amalgamation of the two railways in the South, the Great Southern and Western Railway, and the Waterford and Limerick Railway.

31025. That would point to a benefit if they were all amalgamated into the Great Southern and Western?—Well, there is still competition between the Great Southern and Western, the London and North-Western, and the Great Western, with regard to through traffic, and there is competition with the Midland Great Western for Irish traffic, so that it is not a monopoly so far as Limerick is concerned.

31026. You think it has been an advantage for the Waterford and Limerick to be absorbed by the Great Southern?—Yes.

31027. And you are in favour of three or four systems instead of the ~~amalgamation~~ ^{amalgamation} in England that we have?—Yes.

31028. What about the Railway Commissioners' Court—have you any opinion upon that?—There was one question asked, whether there should be any subsidy given to the Irish railways.

31029. I think we will leave that, unless you have something special to say?—The only thing is that if a subsidy is given, it would be necessary to have some Board of Trade, or other Government Department to see that the railways gave due consideration in return for the subsidy.

31030. I will pass that. I do not see how it could be possibly done. I suppose you are of opinion it is a disadvantage to have different gauges?—A very great disadvantage.

31031. You would like to see the railways all of one gauge, so that traffic could be sent through without change of bulk?—It would be better when making to spend the money that these light railways cost making them all broad gauge—half their length on the broad gauge would be better than a long narrow gauge. They mostly served for the transit of perishable traffic. With regard to the rates, here is the kind of letter we are constantly receiving. It came the day before I came up from the South of England, with regard to

the Continental rates. (Letter handed to Chairman). If we could get some such reductions as we suggest here in answer No. 5 in our proof of evidence, we could compete. Answer No. 5 states—"We would suggest, for perishable goods, the rate should be not more than one halfpenny per lb., with a minimum of 4d. or 5d., and also a reduction of, say, 10 per cent. off 2d. lbs. and upwards on non-fragile goods, such as butter and bacon, &c. A further reduction in parcels rates per passenger train. I have just sent a box of glass lantern shades to Keston, and have been charged 1s. 3d. These would have gone by parcels post for 6d., but being railway property I was asked to send them by rail, carriage paid. Parcels of perishables, which are carried at much reduced rates, say, 5 lbs. each, from here to Staffordshire, are charged 1s. each, that is 6d. to Queens, and 6d. thence to destination, whereas the parcels post would carry to destination for 5d. only."

31032. The Chairman read the letter produced by the witness, as follows:—

"Conway House, Litchfieldhampton,

"Stamur, October 14th, 1907.

"Messrs. Baines and Son.

"Your P. C. with prices of butter, &c. I am afraid at these prices I cannot do much. I am now buying Continental butter at 1s. 1d. by the lb. or 2lb., and find it very good. I would rather deal within the Empire, other things being equal, but as I buy to sell again to visitors I am unable to do this if I can get better value abroad."

Witness.—She keeps a private hotel at Litchfieldhampton, in Somerset.

31033. Chairman.—That is this month?—Only a couple of days ago.

31034. I see Lipton is selling the best butter at 1s. 1d. a pound?—That is not the same as Limerick creamery butter, which is probably the best butter in Europe.

Examined by Colonel HERCULES POE.

31035. I gather you think when the parcels post gave you a much lower rate, the railway parcels rate ought to have been approximately lowered?—When the parcels post made the reduction of 20 per cent. that the railway parcels rate ought to have been reduced also.

31036. That lady, I suppose gets the butter from Germany. You are aware that 80 per cent. of this traffic in Germany is carried by the Post Office, because when the railways were first conceded to private companies the State made a stipulation that to every train there should be attached a post office van free of charge, and when the State took over the railways they kept up the system, so that practically the Government do not pay the railways, but they do not charge anything for the carriage of the goods in that one post office van?—I did not understand those details before.

31037. Do you think if the Government could make some arrangement of that kind, that post office parcels traffic carried by the railway could be paid by the Government, that that would assist you?—It is not so much the parcels post we complain of. The parcels post will collect parcels and deliver them in any part of the Kingdom free, whereas the railway companies will not collect the parcels, and in a great many cases they will not deliver them free. Therefore, they should give us some reduction.

31038. The free carriage by parcels post van on the railway?—Yes, in the ordinary railway van.

31039. If the State in this country would give the same facilities as they do in Germany, it would help you very considerably?—Yes.

31040. You speak of the desirability of making the narrow gauge lines into broad gauge lines. You know there are about 500 miles of narrow gauge lines in this country, and it would be a costly experiment?—Yes.

31041. How do you propose that the cost should be borne—at the expense of the State?—If the State advanced some money towards helping us.

31042. You would have no objection to its being done at the expense of the British taxpayer. I think we

Oct. 14, 1907.

Mr. K. H. Baines.
(Witness.
Poe and See Limerick.)

Suggested
reduced scale
of rates for
perishable
goods to
meet foreign
competition.

Letter from
Litchfieldhampton, Somerset,
that Continental
butter is
cheaper than
Irish

The suggestion
that the
reduced
parcels post
rates should
have been
applied by
the railway
companies
to all parcels.

The extension
of the
German
system of
small parcels
by parcel
post is
highly recommended.

Proposed
conversion
of the narrow
gauge lines
to broad
gauge at the
Government
expense.

Oct 18, 1907.

Mr. F. B. Ross
(Messrs.
Ross & Son,
Limerick)

Suggested
reduction
of the
ordinary
perishable
traffic rates

all agreed that the disadvantages of the two gauges are very great and involve a great loss of time and a great loss in the traffic that is carried?—Yes.

31041. As to the owner's risk and company's risk rates, what you would like to see would be the percentage between the two very much reduced?—Yes.

31042. At present I gather from what you say, that the rate which the companies charge at their risk is so great that it is almost prohibitive—at any rate, it very much affects your industry?—It is practically prohibitive.

31043. Fifty per cent. over what they charge for owner's risk?—Yes.

31044. And, of course, that is out of all proportion?—Yes.

31045. You would not object to their charging some small extra rate—in the nature of an insurance premium, so to speak—if it were ten or fifteen per cent. above owner's risk rate?—No.

31046. And that would very largely help to develop your particular trade?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

31047. The butter that was cheaper would be better from sources abroad, and would, no doubt, come in wholesale quantities into London?—Quite likely, and then be distributed there.

31048. It would be a wholesale merchant's business?—Quite likely.

31049. You don't know of any retail parcel or postal traffic in butter or eggs from the Continent—small consignments?—No.

31050. What you have to face is an organized wholesale traffic?—Yes.

31051. Your business is rather a retail traffic?—Yes, principally.

31052. Is it your own butter and eggs that you are selling, or do you buy it?—We buy it.

31053. You are merchants?—Yes. That is, we are not manufacturers.

31054. You buy in order to sell?—Yes.

31055. Do you think that the business of distributing in these small consignments is a business that a farmer—that a local producer—can profitably do himself?—Well, the farmers are a good way from the railway station, and the establishment of creameries in the South of Ireland has changed the old methods altogether. The milk is now sent into these creameries. Many of these creameries will not supply the butter to the consumer direct; they will only supply it in large quantities, and therefore the butter must be distributed by retailers. Certainly butter, especially unsalted, must be consumed almost immediately. It is not made to keep. Some of these English firms who get it over, say the salesmen in Manchester keep it a day or two; it is then distributed to the small shops, and by the time it reaches the consumer it may be a week old, and the consumer gets the idea that it is very bad. We have arrangements with some creameries to supply us with butter fresh made, our customers get it next day, they are very pleased with it, and they are willing to pay extra for it.

31056. Then I understand that in your view the farmer could not sell by retail direct to the consumer in England himself?—He would have to buy the butter the same as ourselves.

31057. He does not make it?—Not in our district.

31058. In your part of Limerick the farmers do not make butter; they only sell their milk to the creameries?—That is so.

31059. And they have not got the small quantities to sell?—No. That is a dead trade in Limerick and Tipperary.

31060. You buy from the creameries, break it up, and send it in small consignments, instead of letting it go to Manchester and letting the Manchester man break it up?—Yes.

31061. And would you like to keep that trade?—Yes; it has been growing rapidly with us for the past few years.

31062. Of course a much larger part of that would represent railway carriage if it were sent in parcels instead of in ten tons?—If it goes in ten tons there are several commissions on it to make both.

31063. There is more railway carriage, say, in 500 consignments of ten pounds than on one consignment of a ton?—Yes.

31064. You say that is balanced by its having to go through several hands, and more commissions being paid, while you can get it in quicker, and therefore you can get bigger prices from the consumer?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. Stokes.

31065. Is your trade entirely with Great Britain?—Practically with Great Britain. We have sent to Africa and Egypt and to Paris, but the rates are too high to send it in that way.

31066. All in small consignments?—From half a hundredweight down to a pound.

31067. On the small scale—what is known as "smalls"?—Yes.

31068. You find yourself heavily hit by the rates?—I believe we could do a great deal more if there was a reduction.

31069. You find the rates charged by the railway companies contrast unfavourably with those of the public organisations—the Post Office?—Yes. Since the Post Office have reduced their rates there are people in different parts of England and other places that we can send to—a few pounds to a person by reduced parcels post rate.

31070. Have you had many letters like that from Litchampton?—We very frequently get letters of that kind—saying of the Continental butter being cheaper than we can supply it at.

31071. Does it come to this—that people who buy butter to sell again cannot buy the butter from you in England?—No, because some of them do buy it from us. The case referred to in the letter read to you was from a lady who carries on a private hotel.

31072. They find they are more easily buy it from the Continental importer?—In a great many cases.

31073. Cheaper?—This lady was only a small consumer?—Yes. She said it again; she keeps visitors.

31074. Mr. Stokes—You made this distinction—the person who buys butter for consumption might buy it from you, but if anybody buys it for resale he would find it more to his interest to buy from a free sale source, owing to the low conveyance rate?—Yes. In that case she has to get the butter from some place. She can still get it from Ireland, as she has got it.

31075. It must make a great difference to your budget in the year that you have no such rates as the railways as the Post Office accept?—Yes.

31076. The scale of railway rates being so much higher than the Post Office for parcels?—Well, they are not really higher in one way, but there has been no reduction made corresponding to the reduction given by the Parcel Post, and the facilities the Parcel Post give for collection and delivery. Many a time we have to send by parcels post two parcels instead of one for delivery, because the charge of delivery by the railway company would be more than would balance the saving in the rate.

31077. The relative scales of rates from the Continent to England and from Ireland to England impose a disadvantage upon the Irish trader?—I have not the rates from the Continent, but I have always been told they are much lower.

31078. The Litchampton case is a case in point?—Yes.

31079. You complain of the variation "owner's risk" credit on, and of the refusal of through rates. Do you think these characteristics would adhere to any publicly-managed railway system, to a public system of ownership?—Well, the through rates referred to were to the Staffordshire lines.

31080. Under a system of private lines any system can arbitrarily reduce a through rate. Do you think a similar state of things would occur under one system, that you would be refused such a through rate?—Do you mean if all the railways were amalgamated?

31081. Yes. If all the railways were amalgamated would not such a system as you complain of be ended—would not through rates be given as a matter of course?—I do not approve of one amalgamated system. I would sooner see the Irish railways in three or four large main railway companies.

31082. A great part of your complaint against the companies is that they contend with each other, that the contention is wasteful, and that the services at junctions are so managed as to miss each other. Would not that state of affairs continue if you had

The Irish trade in small consignments of perishable commodities with specified wholesale traffic

The necessary system in Ireland has stored direct sale of butter by farmers to consumers

The small parcels traffic affords more revenue to the railways than large consignments

three or four large companies, as you suggest?—Well, no; suppose if one-third of the South from Dublin to Ennis was in the hands of one railway company, the traffic would then be one, and there would be none of those junctions or disengagements with other companies.

31035 We have had evidence that some of the longest delays occur within the systems of individual companies. Do you not think that, so long as there are three or four different companies there will be more or less fluctuation—much more, in fact, than there could arise under one system. Is that not so. There could be no contention in one system—could there?—Well, but that would be a monopoly.

31036 Could there?—No.

31037 Therefore the occasions arise oftener when there are three or four systems; is not that obvious?—Yes.

31038 Now, as to the question of subsidies. Suppose it were conceded that there should be a grant to Ireland, by way of a set-off against over-taxation, do you consider it possible, with the present ideas of local elective government, that the Irish people would ever consent that a grant of that kind should be handed over to the railway companies, rather than be administered by a representative body?—Yes, I suppose they would; but if it came direct from the British Government to the railways they would not have any choice in the matter.

31039 But would the Irish people assent to that?—I think a great many of the business people would assent to that.

31040 That they would assent to such a system being carried out under any but a representative body—is that your idea of constitutional government?—It would depend upon the amount of the grant.

31041 It would have to be considerable. Now, about amalgamation. There is an outcry from the public for better management, and for reductions—large and general reductions—of rates. You make the proposition to leave the management in the present hands, to leave the rates as high as they are, and, by concentration of companies, to give them means for the payment of higher dividends; do you think that would satisfy the public?—No; but if there were amalgamation of those lines their expenditure would be considerably reduced.

31042 But they would have the option of paying it away in dividends. There would be no security that the profit would be devoted to reduction of rates?—No doubt; but that would be a matter of arrangement.

31043 If you pay a subsidy you may make arrangements, but if you simply amalgamate companies and make them larger, and, as a result of the amalgamation, the working expenses diminish, and the margin of net profits increases, you cannot prevent them paying away that in dividends?—Except that in the Act of Parliament that amalgamates them there might be some condition, some clause, that the rates were not to be raised, as in the case of the Limerick and Waterford Act.

31044 Do you suppose that an increase in net profits, due to reduction of working expenses, could be made the subject of a statutory mandate for reduction of rates?—Yes.

31045 I fail to see how it could be done. Now, about competition. You say that competition is advantageous, and obliges the railway companies to meet the requirements of their customers; but looking to the evidence here, do you think those requirements are now met?—Well, as far as my

experience in Limerick is concerned, we have the advantage of competition. For instance, I can mention a case. A gentleman in Birmingham got twenty lbs. of butter from us, in two lots. One of the consignments was lost. We sent it by the Great Western Railway, and they refused to compensate us because it was sent at owners' risk rate. We then sent our traffic by the London and North-Western Railway, and when they found that out, they, the Great Western, came in with the amount we claimed in order to get back our traffic. Another case—We wanted reduced rates to the northern part of Scotland, and could not get it from one company; but, when the Midland opened the Bosphorus route, the company who first refused waited upon us, and gave us the same rate to Wick and the North of Scotland that we have now to towns in England. That was the result of competition.

31046 We know something of the means that railways adopt to take traffic from each other; but do you suppose that under a public system of transport there would be such a thing as owners' rail. Do not you think that the State would pay for any loss?—If there were the same conditions as in the parcels post we would be quite satisfied with the conditions.

31047 You would be better off?—Certainly.

31048 When you spoke of competition, I thought you meant competition between land and sea carriage? You do not refer to that?—No, transport competition.

31049 Do you mean competition between land and sea carriage?—It was more the different railways that compete with one another.

31050 Very well. What is this competition?—They carve up for traffic, and they break up the message traffic of their country into small consignments, and send it in crawling trains in circuitous routes. Do you think that is beneficial to the public in the long run?—If we did not get the competition the industry would be lost.

31051 Yes; but suppose, Mr. Bennis, you had a system in which nobody would have an interest in diverting traffic—so which all traffic—yours, and every other traffic—would be sent by the most convenient and shortest, and therefore the speediest route, and at a lower rate than is now charged by even the shortest route, would not that be better?—Yes, if we could ensure that.

31052 The whole case for a public system of railways is based on that hypothesis. Upon the assumption that this result would be ensured, would not that be the best system?—Yes; if you can ensure those results.

31053 Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—I think the witness stated that the difference between the owners' risk and company's risk for perishables is 50 per cent. The difference is 25 per cent. for perishable goods carried at owners' risk or company's risk?—The railway company advertise perishable goods carried at half usual rates. We never send by company's risk, because the rates are so much in excess.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor (continuing in rate book).—These are the rates of the companies.

Mr. Yates.—I think the misunderstanding is rather in this way. Butter and other such products are carried, in the first place, at reduced rates, at owners' risk, and these are something approximating to half the ordinary rates—some cases lower—and it is if these articles are sent at ordinary rates it is 25 per cent. over the reduced rates?—These rates are not through rates to England.

31054 Chairman.—They are local rates, they are not through rates.

31055 Lord Pirrie.—It requires a lawyer to find that out.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—I do not know whether a lawyer is any better than a layman.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. R. H. Bennis (Witness).
11, Grosvenor Road, Limerick.

The benefits of competition between privately-owned companies.

Public ownership appeared if otherwise rates and more satisfactory conditions of service would be the certain result.

The difference between the ordinary and owners' risk rates for perishables.

Mr. WILLIAM SCULLY examined by the CHAIRMAN.

31103 You are from Ballaghinacree?—Yes, Ballaghinacree.

31104 You represent the Co-operative Society there?—Yes, Chairman.

31105 Are you on the Committee?—Yes.

31106 When was it established?—In 1885.

31107 The business of the Co-operative Society, is it confined to one county, or more?—It is part of three counties—King's, Queen's, and Tipperary.

31108 The North Riding of Tipperary?—Yes, the North Riding.

31109 Where is the headquarters of the Society situated?—At the present time—It was in Drinahanna at the commencement, but at the present time it is in a place called Coolberris, because the secretary has changed, and he had to change his quarters to Coolberris.

31110 What is the railway service of the District?

Mr. William Scully, Representative of the Glanish Co-operative Society.

District in which the Glanish Co-operative operates.

Oct. 28, 1907. —The Great Southern and Western Railway paid.

Mr. William
Keefe, -
Representative
of the
Glenish
Co-operative
Society.

The district of
the Glenish
Co-operative
Society served
by the Great
Southern and
Western
Railway.

Objects of the
Society.

Complaint
against the
Great Southern
and Western
Company as
to facilities
for pig traffic
from Roscrea

Resolution
on the subject
of pig traffic
between
Roscrea and
Limerick
adopted by
Glenish
Association in
1898.

Representa-
tives made to
the Company
and their
explanation

—The Great Southern and Western Railway paid.

31111. What does your society represent?—The Society. We first commenced in this way—

31112. Does it represent the general traders in the district?—It represents the farmers of the district.

31113. The farmers?—Quite so.

31114. Well, now, it is the agricultural industry?—The agricultural interest.

31115. What particular complaint have you got with reference to the railway?—When we started, in 1895, one of the chief objects was, and should be, to look after the interests of the farmers in the pig industry, because we were very much in the hands of the jobbers, and we intended if possible, to get the pigs direct to the cars of Limerick, which we succeeded in doing after a struggle of about twelve months, and then we commenced sending in 1896—December, 1896—and the freight from Roscrea to Limerick by Nenagh was 38s. 5d. a wagon.

31116. What is the distance?—About the mileage I cannot say exactly. I know that the rate is what I have said.

31117. What is the rate?—38s. 5d.

31118. For what?—For any wagon of live stock, pigs, for instance, and by Limerick Junction it is 38s. 10d., and we are placed so that we are nearest by Nenagh, and they would not carry the pigs for us by the shortest route, but by the longer route. They took three carriages, and after the third wagon it was stopped. We had to have them before seven o'clock loaded at Roscrea Station, and if we had not then there before seven o'clock they could not take them via Nenagh by the goods train. Then we asked them if they would give two days in the month that they would delay that goods train half an hour to give the farmers a chance to have them in in time, because they delayed it in Clonghordan, about seven miles further on. They would not delay it at Roscrea, but they would delay it at Clonghordan, but what they did was worse—they changed the hour from seven to five, so that that completely wiped us out of the short route. They would not leave our pigs over night at Roscrea Station, but they would send them on to Ballypherry at eight o'clock in the evening, and leave them till two o'clock in the morning, and they would not leave them at Roscrea Station. The pigs from Birt, eleven miles further on the branch line—they would send them into Roscrea and leave them there all night, but our pigs, that were loaded at night, would not be left so as to send by the short route.

31119. Very well. You have mentioned your grievance. Have you represented that to the railway company?—Certainly so.

31120. When was that, do you remember?—I have it here. The following resolution was adopted at Glenish Association, at a general meeting in 1898—

"That we desire to call the attention of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to the fact that formerly we could send pigs to Limerick via Nenagh, at a cost of 28s. 5d. per truck, but owing to the change of terms, and being forced to send them by Limerick Junction, we have to pay 10s. 5d. per truck extra—38s. 10d. This, we consider, not fair treatment to our society, and hope the railway company will consider the matter and give us a special rate via Limerick Junction." We were intended to have the pigs sent by Limerick Junction—the long route—so that they give us the 28s. 5d. rate. That is all we asked, in fact.

31121. What was the reply of the railway company?—There were replies upon replies. It was all useless. We could get no good of them, and it went on and was still drawn—they would give no clause, and it went on till the 1st April, 1899, and to our surprise there was 3s. 4d. per wagon added to the rate, making it 42s. 9d.

31122. You have read the resolution. Perhaps you had better read the reply of the railway company?—I will read the reply. It was simply this—that there was a mistake. Then, there is a reply after the rate of 3s. 4d. The reply was this—I have the reply in writing from Mr. Croker.

31123. It is dated 6th December, 1899.—Yes. "Dear Sir—With reference to your letter of the 6th ult., I beg to say that it is against our rules to load up and keep live stock in trucks for some twelve hours before sending them away, as would be the case in loading stock at Roscrea for Limerick, via

Bridhill. As regards stock tendered us at Farnestown, the matter is different, for when they reach Roscrea they are in demand for ultimate destination. It is true, unfortunately, that stock from Farnestown must be all right at Roscrea owing to the train service, but if this were not done we could not accept the traffic. As regards the truck rate between Roscrea and Limerick, via Ballypherry, I have written to the manager of Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway as to the adoption of 38s. 10d. rate, and hope to be able to get same arranged. The figure, we may say, was used by our agent without authority, and the rate at present recorded of 38s. 5d. is the one that was agreed on last March by the Waterford and Limerick Company. I hope, however, to be able to get the lower figure put in force. Yours truly, H. W. Croker."

31124. That is before the amalgamation of the Waterford and Limerick?—Partly, I believe, or in or about the time.

31125. It was a separate company then?—I understood so.

31126. Mr. Croker.—This was before the amalgamation of 1900?—Quite so.

31127. Chairman.—After the receipt of the reply had you any further complaint?—Of course we kept still hammering on, and about December, as near as I can remember—a little after that time, between April and December—and they said it was the fault of the agent, still we never got the money refunded, but after that time we got the 38s. 10d. rate again, but not the low rate.

31128. In consequence of that reply did you discontinue sending pigs via Nenagh?—No, we still continued to send pigs, but the society partly gave it up, the co-operative society, and then Mr. Matheson took it up personally, himself, and I acted as agent for him, and something about 1896—the end of it, or January, 1905—I complained to Mr. Matheson, specially, myself, about the matter of having 10s. 5d. a wagon, as he was then paying the freight. Previous to that, the feeder was paying. He ordered me to offer the pigs to them at Roscrea via Nenagh, and let them decide then or not, as they wished. I did so, and I refused to wear it, but I believe it is a positive fact, that the moment they saw there was going to be any proceedings, they gave the cheaper rate.

31129. Since then I think your Society has discontinued sending pigs altogether?—Yes, there is no necessity now. The live stock scale is there, and the merchants are all working the live stock scale.

31130. And the co-operative society got their live stock sent from Roscrea?—No, the custom got them by live weight.

31131. What about County Mayo—what have you got to say about it?—Early in November, 1905, I was sent by the L.A.O.S. to start the business from the County Mayo, of sending pigs for the people there, on the same lines, to Limerick, as they had nobody to pass a ring of jobbers that were local men.

31132. The traffic is pigs?—Practically all, in the case, it is pigs and nothing more that we complain of. I went there, and after a few days' work I arranged with the Midland Great Western Railway to have them brought to Limerick. Supposing pigs were loaded on Wednesday evening in either Westport or Ballyhamon, they came on, and they remained, as far as I understood, in Town or some of these stations along there till Thursday evening. They did not leave that until Thursday evening, so that they did not arrive in Limerick until nine o'clock on Thursday night, and after that, again, they would have to remain all that night in the wagons and could not be killed till Friday morning, and that practically stopped the whole traffic, because the time they were in the wagons was so extraordinary that the reduction was 7 lb. to 9 lb. a pig.

31133. Do you mean that that delay, not in the delivery, because the pigs were in Limerick, but they arrived too late to be killed that night?—If they were sent on Wednesday evening from Ballyhamon or Westport, and taken direct, they would be next morning in Limerick, and could be killed next morning, but by not being sent on in time they had to remain two nights and a day in the wagon.

31134. And you believe that all that detention would reduce the weight of the pigs?—Certainly, without any mistake.

31135. 8s. or seven pence?—In fact more with out any mistake.

31135. All the instances you have given are within three or four years of the present time. Are things being worked satisfactorily now?—They are, because necessity is the mother of invention, and in Co. Mayo it is the same way still, but the Great Southern and Western Company has yielded through practical compulsion.

31137. At any rate pigs are being carried much more satisfactorily than in the time you speak of?—Certainly.

31138. To the advantage of senders and consignees?—I quite agree with that.

Examined by Mr. SEAYOR.

31139. What is the nature of the practical compulsion to which you say the Great Southern and Western Railway have yielded?—By offering the pigs to them by the short route and saying if they did not take them there would be law proceedings taken to compel them.

31140. To try the question whether they should not be obliged to take them?—That is right.

31141. They yielded rather than lost the law?—I suppose so.

31142. Do I understand the County Mayo complaint operates still?—Quite so.

31143. This case of the pigs one and a half days and two nights with no food or water appears to be one for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals?—Quite right.

31144. Is that going on at present?—The very same thing will occur to-morrow, for I have had a letter asking if I could do anything.

31145. It causes delay, embarrassment, and loss of trade?—Quite so.

31146. The other case is not now in operation, but you bring it forward as an illustration?—Of what did occur.

31147. The Society simply wanted that the train should be delayed two mornings in the month so that you might load by daylight and not by dark?—Quite so.

31148. And the result of your request was that you were compelled to send the pigs by a longer route and pay 10s. 5d. more?—Yes.

31149. And that continued up to the end—until the Liverpool merchants came and took the pigs at your own place?—That is so.

31150. Do you think that anything like this could happen under a public system of transit, administered by a public authority?—I don't think it could be as bad under a public authority.

31151. Do you think that under a public authority, working a unified system, there would or could be such a thing as forcing you to send consignments by a longer route at a greater cost?—I do not think it could be possible.

31152. Would not the shortest route and the least cost apply as a matter of course?—Yes.

31153. Are you in favour of working the railways of Ireland as a unified system under a representative authority?—By a representative authority, so long as it would be carried out in every way for the benefit of all.

31154. An authority responsible to the people of Ireland?—Quite so.

Examined by Mr. ADEWORTH.

31155. Mr. Seayor, do you say that the railway companies kept the pigs from Wednesday afternoon till Thursday night in the wagon without food or water?—Quite so.

31156. I think it is illegal?—I cannot say.

31157. I think they are bound to move them out of the wagon every twenty-four hours. Is not that so?

Mr. Telford.—I do not know that there is any legal liability.

31158. Mr. Adeworth.—Surely there is an Act of Parliament that provides that you are bound to take animals out of the wagon if they are in more than twenty-four hours.

Mr. Telford.—I think it is "reasonable care" or something of that sort. I do not think there is any stipulation.

31159. Lord Parnell.—Not in Ireland?

31160. Colonel Hulsebrook Pw.—I think the railway is entitled to make a certain charge.

31161. Mr. Adeworth.—Look in Balfour Brown. I think you will find it so.

Mr. Telford.—I do not think it arises practically, and I would like to ask this gentleman if he has ever complained to the Midland Company, because there is a large quantity of pig traffic comes from the Western stations, and I do not remember receiving any complaints of delay or bad train service. I would like to ask has he ever complained?—(Witness).—The complaints were made, and they could practically do nothing because they wrote to the Great Southern. They met and could not agree.

31162. Mr. Adeworth.—Mr. Seayor, can you give Mr. Telford the precise date on which you complained and to whom you complained, and he will look into the matter?—I have some correspondence here, and I think I remember the name "Telford."

31163. If you have got his own letter perhaps you will show it and he will identify it at once. It does matter who you complained to—the Great Southern or the Midland—if you give the precise date—I wrote to Mr. Adeworth of the I.A.G.B. (I have not the correspondence), and he was to write to Mr. Telford on the subject.

Mr. Telford.—Can you give the date?—I have not it now but I certainly can.

31164. Mr. Adeworth.—Perhaps you will let the Secretary have the dates on which any specific complaints were made, and he will let Mr. Telford have it—it was in 1903 at all events.

31165. One other question. I do not understand what you said about the company forcing you to use the short-cut route?—The longest route.

31166. Forcing you to use the longest route?—I said simply this. The goods train from Dublin used to pass, previous to the time we commenced, about 7 a.m. and when we began to look for the two days a month delay, instead of giving the two days they changed the hour. The hour used to be seven o'clock, and we could manage it at seven, but they changed it to half-past five.

31167. That was too early?—Entirely.

31168. And you had to send round by Rathfriland and Thurles?—Yes.

31169. Instead of sending by the Nenagh route?—Yes.

31170. There was no train left that suited the traffic round by Nenagh?—No.

31171. How do the pig buyers manage?—The pig buyers on fair days are in a different position. There is a special arranged for the fair.

31172. You send more frequently, and they send larger quantities and get a special train?—Yes, but the owner is practically on the same scale as we were. The carriers are working weekly.

31173. You do not know what rates they are paying?—I cannot say that. It is not my business to know their work but I know perfectly well what were the rates. Only Mr. Matheson instructed me to offer the pigs I believe—I cannot swear—but I know that it must be that Mr. Matheson has got the cheap rate from them by this route.

31174. By the Nenagh route?—By the Nenagh route, but they might go the other if they charged the lower rate.

31175. What is the rate?—28s. 5d. by Nenagh and 38s. 3d. by the Junction.

31176. Do you think that is confined to Mr. Matheson?—I could not tell you that. I would not like to answer. When I was working for Mr. Matheson I did not look about anyone else. Let everyone look after himself.

31177. Whether it is carried by Nenagh or round by Thurles it goes at 28s. 5d. rate, and on fair days they are carried always by special trains?—Yes. They will go the short route that day.

Examined by Colonel HURCHESSON FOR.

31178. I understand you to say that at the time when you had this grievance with the railway companies they replied that they could not allow you to load the pigs at night, because it was not their habit to load pigs keeping them in the truck, and at the same time they were allowing the people at Burr to load their pigs, keeping them in the truck?—Certainly.

31179. That is an illustration which has been used before—that under the present system it is in the power of the railway company to give, in that respect, differential terms between places, one over the other?—Quite so.

31180. If your statement is correct?—That is so.

Oct. 18, 1907.

Mr. William Seayor,
Representative of the
County Mayo
County Council.

Complaint of
the duty to
pay traffic.
Great Mayo
to Limerick.

Insufficient
representation
to Railway
Company.

(See Appendix
No. 41).

Complaints as
to pig traffic
from Burr.

Allegation
that pig traffic
from Burr
has a better
service than
that from
Keshora.

Oct. 18, 1907.

Mr. William
Scally,
Representative
of the
Omnibus
Co-operative
Society.

The inter-
section of the
Department
of Agriculture
with the
Railway Com-
mission not
sought by this
Society.

31175. And I suppose you would hope that, under any change that might be made—whether amalgamation or State purchase, or otherwise—there would be no reason for such treatment, and it could not possibly be given?—Yes.

Examined by Lord FRANK.

31176. Do I understand you to say that you have complained to the Agricultural Board that these pigs are kept in the wagon?—To the I.A.O.S.

31180. That is a private organisation, with Mr. Anderson at the head?—Quite so.

31181. You have not gone before the Government body?—Not the Department.

31182. You have not put it before the railway companies?—We did all in our power that way. There was loads of correspondence.

31183. You have complained a good deal about the different rates. Have you ever looked up the rate book to see what the rate was from a certain station to Limerick, or did you just take the word of the porter or manager?—We ought to do that. The only way we looked up was that we knew that between the rate by the short route and the long route there was 10s. 6d. of odds.

31184. I think you said you thought some people were getting it sent by the longer route at the low rate?—Yes, the Berr people were.

Mr. ROBERT GOODBODY, M.I.E.E., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Robert
Goodbody,
M.I.E.E.
(Limerick,
J. & L. E.
Goodbody,
Chairman).

31190. You are a member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers?—Yes.

31191. You are a member of the firm of J. and L. E. Goodbody, of Clonsilla and Dublin?—I am one of the managing directors of it.

31192. Where do you live principally?—In Clonsilla.

31193. What are the business there?—The principal department I look after is the jute spinning, but my brothers and cousins are looking after the spinning, flour milling, and corn—and, of course, we have a large flour milling interest in Limerick.

31194. In regard to jute spinning, it is all in period, is not it?—Yes.

31195. And you manufacture it there?—Yes.

31196. How many persons do you employ?—Between 500 and 700.

31197. Then it is a very important industry?—Yes.

31198. What principal railways serve your district?—The Great Southern and the Midland. The Great Southern has a siding into the works.

31199. When your traffic is sent out it is loaded into the railway trucks?—Yes.

31200. Have you any special complaints with regard to railway facilities?—No; we have no special complaints with regard to the working of the traffic at all.

31201. Are you satisfied with the through rates that are in operation?—Yes, as regards jute, we have no complaints to make at all, as regards through rates. Of course we would need to get through rates on other lines, too, which we wanted. Seventy per cent. of our goods go to England.

31202. Seventy per cent. go to England?—Yes.

31203. It is necessary for the proper conduct of your business that you should have facilities with regard to railway rates to all places in England?—Yes.

31204. And you have them, except to the North-Eastern and North Staffordshire?—I did not know about the North Staffordshire; on the North-Eastern we do a good deal.

31205. I do not know whether you heard the evidence to-day?—It is the first time I heard it.

31206. That there are negotiations going on, with a view, I suppose, of extending these through rates to the North-Eastern?—At present all our North-Easterns go by Sligo, and then round to the North-Eastern.

31207. Loaded locally?—Yes, loaded locally with Yock and other North-Eastern stations.

31208. If you have no complaints, and are satisfied with all the goods rates, what about the passenger fares? Do you think they are satisfactory?—I do

31185. You say you never took the trouble to look up the rate book to see whether it was entered?—It was this way. Berr was eleven miles further from Limerick to go on to Roscom, and still they could get the short route. I do not know exactly how much they were charged.

31186. You never took the trouble yourself, as representing this large firm, to look up the rate book for yourself to see what was entered as the official rate for pigs to Limerick?—No, certainly not.

31187. You did not. Then, I think, to a certain extent, you were to blame for not seeing what your neighbours were being charged?—We knew perfectly well they were charged low, according to the route, than we were.

31188. I do not know how you knew if you did not take the trouble to look?—It is quite easy to see we were doing the best we could for the advantage of our Society, which we did do, and we brought them out of the hardship; and that we did, and we are not ashamed to say it.

31189. You had an opportunity, if you liked, to avail yourself of seeing the rate which the railway companies are bound to keep?—I am sure your question is perfectly right, and it should have been done; but, at the same time, we did what we thought was to be done.

not think so. I think the first and second class fares are certainly too high.

31209. In proportion to the third? What about the third?—They are a penny a mile; that is the legal fare.

31210. You have no complaints to make about that?—No, I do not think so. I think the excursion fares are exceptionally low—that is 3s. for 128 miles return.

31211. You do not complain of that?—I think it is too low in proportion.

31212. Too low for whom—for the people?—If they can afford to carry them by the ordinary train at that, the ordinary fares are too high.

31213. Would you be surprised to find it is quite possible to carry them profitably at 3s. on special excursions?—I am not talking of a special, but an ordinary train.

31214. I expect they are carried by special trains?—No, it is by ordinary trains.

31215. At any rate it is the first time we have heard about the fares being too low. With regard to the second class, I suppose you will agree with the evidence that has been given before us, that there is too great a difference between the second and third class fares?—Ratified too much. The second class fare is 13d.

31216. It is 75 per cent. more than the first is 25d., and the return fare is rather more than two-thirds extra in some cases.

31217. In your judgment, it would benefit the people of Ireland if the second and first class fares were reduced?—Yes.

31218. Are you aware of the enormous proportion of third class passengers carried in the country?—Oh, yes.

31219. As compared with first and second?—Yes. I do not think it would be very much less if they were to reduce the standard rate of the first and second class as a great deal of the receipts are first and second and traders' tickets, and, of course, they would not be reduced. It would not influence the revenue received if the standard fares were reduced so much, as it would appear to look on paper, from the returns, and the receipts.

31220. In other words, the first class receipts shown in the returns embrace the traders' tickets and the periodical tickets, which would not be affected by a reduction of the ordinary fares?—No. In 1870 the second class fares were all advanced at the time of the boom of the war. The single fares were reduced some years after, but the return fares never were reduced.

31221. Do not you think that if the third class was made less it would encourage a larger increase of traffic?—I do not think so. I do not think the traffic is in the country so immense ever much.

Extent of the
Clonsilla jute
spinning
industry.

Railways
serving Clonsilla.

The rates and
facilities in
general satisfactory.

The extension
of through
bookings into
the N. & E.
Eastern
District of
England
required.

31222. With regard to train services, have you any observations to make upon that point?—I think the present service on the Great Southern and on the Midland is as much as you can expect.

31223. And as much as the traffic would justify?—As the traffic would justify.

31224. To make it remunerative to the railways?—Yes.

31225. And that an additional service might be an advantage to a few, but it would be out-weighted by the disadvantages to the railway companies?—I do not think it would pay at all.

31226. Are you of opinion that the Irish railways have been managed in such a way as to give every encouragement to the industries of the country?—I think, in past times, they were not. They were inclined to get all they could out of the industries. When a mine started an industry they were inclined to get as much as they could. For instance, taking the jute spinning industry. If they had not met us in rates we would have closed the works and taken them away. In fact, we always gave an ultimatum.

31227. Of course that would mean an enormous loss to the district. You have 600 or 700 hands employed?—We pay over £5,000 a year in freight.

31228. In wages?—No, in freight. In Clara we pay over £21,000 a year in wages.

31229. And you say that if it had not been for the railway companies meeting you with reduced rates you would have had to close the establishment?—We would.

31230. Does not that point in the direction that if the same policy was adopted it would tend to encourage other industries in other parts of Ireland?—I think the time is too late for that—for trying to create industries in the Midlands or Southern part of Ireland. There is no labour in the country, for one thing; and any industry that you start, if it is in competition with the foreigner or the United Kingdom or America, it competes with the products of those countries. You could not possibly start a new industry in the Midlands or Southern counties that could stand on its own feet, unless after many years. You may pour capital into it for years, which would be to lose capital, very much the same way as our own. There is this difference about Clara, that it has been a manufacturing district for eighty years, and the inhabitants were all brought up from children as textile workers—handloom weavers. Every house in our district was at one time built for four handlooms, hand-spinning of flax.

31231. That exists in other parts of the country too?—In some parts.

31232. I have seen it myself?—The Guinness Works closed up all the hand-looms. We had eighty handlooms worked ourselves.

31233. The foundation of your business is jute, and the whole of it is imported?—Yes.

31234. There is nothing grown?—The great competitors are Dundee and Calcutta.

31235. And Rishikie's?—The London works are shut up long ago.

31236. I am speaking of Dundee?—They have the Dundee place.

31237. What you say is that your principal competitors are Dundee and Calcutta?—Yes.

31238. Chairman.—I thank you for the opinion that the railways of this country should be practically united into two systems?—I think that would be the most economical way.

31239. That is the first time, Mr. Goodbody, that two systems have been suggested to us. We have had one system suggested. We have had three, or four, or five, but I don't think we have had it suggested before that two systems would be sufficient. In your judgment, that would be sufficient for the proper development of the trade of the country?—I think that two systems would be quite sufficient.

31240. One for the North and the other for the South?—Yes; take a line practically across the Midlands.

31241. Are you in favour of any general reduction of rates if amalgamation took place; would you be in favour of the Treasury subsidizing the railway companies for any loss sustained, compensating them for loss induced by the reduction of rates?—What I should have suggested is this: there are many of these leased lines baronial lines, in difficulties where the working expenses nearly

eat up the receipts. You cannot expect the railways, in the event of amalgamation to take over these lines, to buy them, for the greatest cost, or anything like it, or even at the baronial guarantee. Some of these would require a great deal of money to be laid out on them.

31242. Most of them?—Most of them, in fact. Most of these railways. The Ballinacorney, such as the Galway and Clifden line, were made at the expense of the Government, and then handed over to the Midland Company, practically free; handed over to them to work. Something of that kind would be a practical way of getting rid of these difficulties.

31243. Someone would have to provide and be responsible for the capital?—Do you mean the companies?

31244. I mean that so much money has been spent on these railways in the hope of earning a profit, and you say you would hand them over to the railway company free?—I think that is a question for the State or the Government.

31245. That is what I am coming to. In these cases do you say that the State should come in and relieve the district of its outlay, that these railways should be handed over in a proper condition to the railway companies, the big companies, and that they should work them to the best advantage?—Yes, the only condition I would have would be that in all cases they should be worked to the satisfaction of the Railway Commissioners.

31246. The present Railway Commissioners?—Whatever Railway Commissioners there are.

31247. The Railway Commissioners in England know nothing about railway working?—We have a Railway Commission in Ireland.

31248. What Commission?—I don't know what it is you call it. The Commission you apply to with complaints.

31249. Yes, that is in cases of dispute with the companies. But they know nothing about railway construction? You mean some authority appointed by the State?—Yes. They would see that the companies acted fairly as regards these particular lines.

31250. Do you think that the Board of Trade regulations—witnesses have given evidence here on that point—have been too exacting, and that this has increased the cost of making and working these lines?—I think there should be some elasticity about it; there is too much of the cast iron about their rules. Take the Bangor Railway. There is one engine on seventeen miles of line, and it goes backward and forward, and yet the whole is worked on the block system.

31251. There is no necessity for that under the Board of Trade regulations?—Well, the block system is in operation there.

31252. It is not necessary?—I am not going into that; I cannot say.

31253. If an undertaking is given that at no time will more than one engine be on the line at the same time there is no necessity for the block regulations?—Of course you have to deal with it as a specialist. I cannot go into that kind of thing.

31254. I think that is all I need ask you.

Examined by LORD PIERCE.

31255. I understand you to say, in answer to the Chairman, and I want to know if I am correct in it—that the time is too late when assistance can be given to Irish railways, which would enable them to reduce rates and so increase industries and inland manufactures—in other words, that there are no people, that the population has so diminished in the inland districts by the neglect of the past that you don't think it would be any use trying now?—Well, take our own works for the last thirty years. We could have given employment to fifty girls more many a time if we could get suitable girls.

31256. I only want to be quite sure as to your views. Owing to the want of people in the inland districts you fear it is too late for any great industrial prosperity to be brought about in those inland districts?—Yes, particularly in an industry that has to compete with England or any foreign country, whatever it is.

31257. I agree with your remark, whatever it is if the article produced has to enter into keen competition?—If you take the population from 1871. We

Oct 18, 1907.
Mr Robert Goodbody, M.P.
(Chairman).
J. S. L. F. Goodbody, Clerk.

Suggested transfer to the State of the financial support of the railways of the State and State indebtedness.

Proposed transfer of the Irish Railways free of financial burdens to two large companies.

Some remarks from the Board of Trade as to the use of small lines and the necessity of re-organizing.

The difficulty presented by the decreased population in the development of new industries in Ireland.

Oct. 19, 1907.

Mr. Robert
Goodbody,
M.P. for
Glasgow,
Glasgow,
Glasgow,
Glasgow.

The importance
of
importing
into
Glasgow
from
Glasgow
to
Glasgow.

Suggested
reduction
of
ordinary
passage
fares
between
Glasgow
and
Glasgow.

The
Glasgow
and
another
railway
in
Glasgow.
The
only
line
between
Glasgow
and
Glasgow.

No
more
the
further
development
of
the
railway
industry
in
Glasgow.

started our works in 1864. The population decreased in the King's County from 75,000 to 50,000.

31257. And this in spite of your works and others?—Yes. Take Westmeath from 78,000 to 61,000.

31258. If you gave an increased wage, sufficient to induce people to come back from England or from Canada, you could not afford to compete with other manufacturers?—Not at all.

31259. Where do you import the jute—at what port?—All through Dublin.

31260. Do you import direct?—No, mostly through London, Liverpool, and Dundee.

31261. Would you not be able to get it cheaper by getting it direct, from Calcutta, say, or Bombay?—Yes, but the expenses are too large for us. The getting of a cheap rate of freight has been rather a hardship to Irish industries. In the old days cargoes of 2,000 and 3,000 came to Dublin. I took that myself. Then we had to take cargoes of 7,000 to 8,000.

31262. That is taken?—Yes. Now it is 40,000.

31263. There is now a very large type of carrying steamers, and they go to a district, or a particular centre, and you buy cheaper there than you would if you imported direct, and you pay smaller rates?—Yes.

31264. Well, now the next point. I want to be clear and to see if I agree with you. I take it your view is that it would be more beneficial to the people of various inland counties if, instead of having this large number of cheap excursion trains, the railway companies would have lower regular fares—in other words, to reduce the regular passenger fares, so that passengers could all go at the same, but a reduced, rate, and take off the excursion trains. That, you think, would be better for the people generally?—I am sure it would. If you take the result of the Exhibition business, you will see there that you have cheap fares every Thursday for the district in the ordinary trains. What is the result? The pressure is taken off every other day of the week, and they all crowd down to the Thursday trains, which are overcrowded. The trains on that day are late; everything is disorganised.

31265. So that these excursions disorganise the trade of the village or town?—Everything is disorganised by them.

31266. For the sake of the regular trade of the village or town you would prefer regular cheaper trains, and you do not think that the railway company would get less money as a whole?—Oh, no; I think they want all the money they can get.

31267. You would not reduce the income by taking the people cheaper in ordinary trains instead of in excursion trains?—No.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.

31268. Of the total quantity of jute imported into Ireland two-thirds is for you?—Practically the whole.

31269. Out of 3,400 tons, 2,600 odd come to Dublin, that is principally for you?—We take more than 2,600.

31270. Then the whole of the 3,400 would be for Glasgow? I may say these figures don't profess to be accurate, they are the returns of the Department and are only approximate figures, but that is not material just now. What other places are there?—There are only the two places. The other is a small thing in Waterford. All the others have failed.

31271. Otherwise.—What—all failed?—All the other places that have been established in Ireland have failed.

31272. Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—Is your business as largely developed as it can be?—I think so.

31273. Lord Purvis.—You said you could employ, if you could get them, fifty more hands?—I thought you meant, Colonel Hutchinson, the works as regards extension of the works.

31274. Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—If you could get the labour would you not do more, go further in that way even?—We could go to the extent that we have the machinery at present. I would not be inclined to increase it.

31275. Is it the difficulty of getting a market for your product?—We could not in this country.

31276. You are, of course, anxious to increase your output?—No, not in the conditions, the drawbacks, the labour question, for instance, and the conditions of life in this country. You would be astonished if you knew

all the difficulties we have to contend with from the ideas of the people. Take one, for instance, we had a case three weeks ago; a child died fourteen months old; all its uncles and aunts and cousins stopped out two days from the work.

31277. Lord Purvis.—Till the funeral?—Yes. Then there was a mission at Clara. We had to stop the works for eight mornings on account of those who attended the mission.

31278. Mr. Sexton.—Do not workmen often leave their work for sport and recreation in Glasgow, and many other places out of Ireland?—It was \$160 out of their wages.

31279. Which they sacrificed for their spiritual benefit, I suppose?

31280. Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—I won't pursue that point.—The drink question. That is one of the greatest curses.

31281. That is not on the increase—I hope you don't find it so. Generally speaking, there is not the same tendency to drink that there was a few years ago.—It is worse. Further, there are Sunday sports, Sunday football. That is one of the worst things we have to contend with now. I deprecate the Great Southern and Western Company could tell how many specials there were into Thurles for a football match between Kildare and Kerry on the Sunday in the summer.

31282. I see you put forward the necessity for more imports and lower rates for raw material?—We require that, not in the jute trade so much. It does apply in the other trades. There are some rates that really are unfair. For instance, the rates of the Great Southern and Midland, where they carry flour cheaper than wheat.

31283. Otherwise.—Cheaper than the raw material?—Yes, cheaper than wheat.

31284. Lord Purvis.—That is very common.

31285. Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—Once, as some of these rates?—If you take the rate to Ruir, they charge 8s. for wheat, and 8s. for flour.

31286. Otherwise.—From Dublin?—Yes. Take Westport. The rate is 10s. 6d. for wheat, and 8s. 6d. for flour.

31287. Dublin to Westport?—Yes.

31288. Mr. Telford.—Perhaps he will state the quantities?—They are both the same quantities. One hundred ton lots.

31289. Otherwise.—The conditions are the same in both cases?—Yes, both 100-ton lots.

31290. Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—And in both cases the rate for flour is considerably less than for wheat?—Yes, at us; just what I have said, 8s. 6d. for flour, against 10s. for wheat.

31291. It is to the advantage of the country to get in wheat rather than flour. It takes about twenty tons of wheat to make fourteen tons of flour. If you manufacture the flour you get bran and pollard, which are important elements in the feeding of cattle and other stock. A ton of flour would produce about half a ton of by-products. That is a necessity for the country. The cattle dealers have to import it, and they would rather we imported wheat than flour?—Oh, yes, certainly. All raw material. Coal is another thing—the rate as a rule has been too high for coal.

31292. To the inland stations?—Yes, where there has been no competition.

31293. You can give instances of the through rate. In my part of the country, Abbeyfeix, the rates for coal, the import rates, are very low. I don't think it is a high rate. What do you call a high rate?—In speaking of the rate for coal, I meant that it would be an advantage, in fact almost indispensable, if we are to at all assist the present industries that coal should be carried as cheaply as possible. It is really the foundation of everything in the way of manufacture.

31294. The whole import of coal is very small, except in the North, for we have very few industries that require much coal. If those industries could be brought to the front, the importation of coal would be larger, and special rates might be given, but in the present conditions I don't think there is any great cause for complaint as regards the rate for coal?—I am only speaking about its effect upon manufacture.

31295. I was very sorry to hear you say that the time, in your opinion, was too late as regards the re-creation of any industries. By that I suppose

you mean we are starting so late in the day, and so handicapped by the industries which have already got the lead of us, that it would be difficult to make headway in this country?—The labour question would be the first difficulty—training and the labour question.

31295. Unfortunately, one of the reasons why the people in this country spend, as you have described it, a good deal of time in unproductive results, or even attending to their spiritual wants, is that for a long time they have had nothing to do except to depend upon agriculture for a living. If these industries were created and developed, that spirit of apathy and want of perseverance would disappear to a great extent. It might take time, but it would largely disappear. If they had industries as in Scotland, if only on a small scale, but probably on similar lines, that spirit might disappear?—I don't think you would ever regenerate any industries in the Midlands and the South except very minor small things.

31296. But you know as well as I do that at the end of the seventeenth century we had flourishing industries of various kinds, which were strangled and put out of existence. But their existence, and the way in which, under the most adverse conditions, they more than once reasserted themselves, proved the natural and industrial aptitude of the people, and if they got a chance they would come to the front again. You know as well as I do that by legislation, by political causes, industries were absolutely crushed out of existence. You have, no doubt, read something of both the majority and minority reports recently issued by the Committee of Enquiry into the working of the Agricultural and Technical Department, and both these reports—Mr. Micks is in a minority, and makes some strong observations—but even the majority, who do not go so far as he does, say that the necessity for nurturing and creating industries in the country is manifest—while Mr. Micks advocates largely increased funds and powers for such a purpose. That was a Commission largely composed of English gentlemen, properly qualified, and quite independent. That, generally, is the view they take. Do you agree with that view?—I don't think it will ever stop emigration. We cannot stop emigration from our own works.

31297. You cannot, because of the conditions of the great majority of the people and their dependence upon the land, and there are greater attractions in foreign countries, in America and Canada; but if you give the people some other outlet, I think that emigration might be stopped. At any rate, it is right to assume that there is something to be said for the view of these Commissioners who have reported so recently in the direction I have just said. Now, supposing the State did not absolutely give direct aid to the development or the creation of industries, but it might mean competition with existing industries, for of course there would be some objection raised to that by traders—do you think that some restrictions might be given indirect assistance by or through the railway companies, in the rates being reduced to the lowest possible, the minimum, in order to develop them in that way. Could we not develop industries in that way?—I think the only assistance could be given in the manner in which I have suggested. It would not do to give assistance to particular industries. You could not give as much as would enable them to succeed. If you carried some things for nothing it would not enable new industries in these lines to be started.

Examined by Mr. ADEWORTH.

31298. I gather that you both spin and weave—your industry is ordinary commercial jute: it is not fine or coarse, or anything of that kind, it is rough work? It is a finished product, and most of it goes out of Ireland?—Yes, 75 per cent.

31299. Do you supply a large part, roughly, of the Irish demand for cooking and so on?—Yes, I do.

31300. Is there an Irish trade?—We have practically the best of it.

31301. That takes 30 per cent. of the output of your works?—Yes.

31302. You speak of the advantage of low import rates. Your point, I think, is that the import

rates on raw material are disproportionately high compared with the import rate for the finished article? You give four as against grain?—If you have a rate for the finished article the same price as the raw material it does not give Ireland a chance to manufacture.

31303. That is your point. And you think, also, that coal ought to be lower?—I think if there is to be any reduction in anything they ought to carry coal as low as they possibly can.

31304. It occurred to me on that point, that we have had a good deal of evidence as to the desirability of developing the Irish coal mines in Leitrim and the Queen's County, and suppose you reduce the coal rates it would make it less easy for them to develop than now, because you reduce the import rates to compete with them?—Our experience is that this coal from Lancashire and these collieries would be quite useless for steam. It is not steam coal.

31305. It cannot enter into competition with the English or Welsh?—No.

31306. Not at equal prices?—There is no comparison.

31307. Chairman.—He means it is no use for raising steam.

31307. Lord Pirrie.—The other is better steam-producing coal.

31307. Chairman.—It is usually anthracite or household coal.

31308. Mr. Awerth.—To come to a quite different point. You say in your proof that State ownership would be ruinous to industrial development; therefore, it would injure even the present industrial?—Well, I think if you do that it will take the Post Office as an example. How does it deal with developing things in the country? I won't say anything about Dublin. The Post Office is exceptionally slow in developing anything in the country. If you take the telephones, a trunk telephone was promised to the Midlands three years ago. They have been talking about it, they sent a man down to the district; they have been making inquiries, all this has gone on, but they are no nearer than they were before to it.

31309. The State is not generally very forward in taking commercial risks—is that your view?—The Post Office would do nothing if they did not see an immediate profit.

31309. And you want a railway to take a risk by reducing fares?—The only way in which the country can be developed is by railways. You cannot expect the country to take up and develop the railways.

31310. Is that your view personally or of your firm?—It is the view of all the members of our firm.

31311. On the other hand, though objecting to State ownership, you think there ought to be only two companies?—I think it would be the most practical way of working it.

31312. Take a crucial instance. You are at Clara, and Clara, it appears, has two railways?—Yes.

31313. Are you prepared to shut up one of them? Of course there must always be some places on the border line where there must be competition if there are only two railways even, but would you object to competition at Clara being abolished?—It would not affect us in any way if the rates were not raised.

31314. That is what you say—assuming rates remain the same you don't value the competition?—I don't, assuming the rates were not raised. I would not object so.

31315. You would not object unless it raised the rates. You don't attach any importance to competition?—In the past it has had the effect of reducing the rates.

31316. Does it still do that?—We have nothing to complain of now.

31317. You speak of past times when things were not as well as they ought to be. What date do you put to that?—I think in the nineties—1890.

31318. You remember the Allport Commission. Sir James Allport's Commission on Irish Railways, in 1898 the report came out?—I remember it at the time.

31319. I don't know whether you date from that or a date rather longer. A great many things there recommended have been done?—Yes.

31320. About these light railways, small railways, there is plenty of precedent for compelling a company to sell. Compulsory purchase we all know. We can

Oct. 28, 1907.
Mr. Robert Goodbody.
K.M.R.
(Messrs J. & L. F. Goodbody, Glens).

Reduced rates for imported raw materials, and for steam coal would assist the home manufacturers.

The separation of the railways by the State likely to injure rather than encourage industrial development.

The maintenance of competition between railway companies not essential if rates are not raised.

Many improvements recommended by the Allport Commission have been carried out.

Oct. 18, 1907.

Mr. Robert Goodbody, M.P. (Member of the L. R. Goodbody, Clara).

The difficulty of dealing with the small unco-operative lines in any amalgamation scheme.

Suggested transfer of these lines to the large companies.

“Don’t ask for anything.”

The necessity for some latitude in the Board of Trade regulations for small lines.

The irregular attendance of Irish factory workers.

The difficulty of profitable working increased by the statutory limitations as to working hours.

“I can easily imagine a Government saying to the management of a railway, ‘We are going to buy you out.’ Could the Government compel a railway to buy? It would have to hand over this small railway to one of the two companies. Do you know of any precedent for compelling that, for compulsory purchase, compelling other people to take a thing over. The Government to buy up some small railway, and say to the company—the Great Southern if it is in that district—you have got to take over this small railway at our price, and work it?—If its revenue does not pay the working expenses there would be some compensation to the railway company if it was taken over.”

31331. What do you think about it—in the Government to fix the compensation or the railway company to say, “We won’t take it over except on our own terms?”—I think that would be a matter of the whole scheme.

31332. You have not thought out how it could be worked?—They were lines of that kind, I think, handed over by the Government. My idea is that the Government would have to relieve these lines, all these guaranteed lines.

31333. That is no use—that is not the end of it. When the Government has got a little railway, how is it to get rid of it to the company?—I should say they should do the same as in the case of the Galway and Clifton line, hand it over to the company, and let them work it, hand it over in working order.

31334. Free, gratis and for nothing. That is what they did in that case?—I think so.

31335. Now, as to the question of one engine. Take Clara to Benagheen. So long as you guarantee that there will be only one engine on it there is no need for black working. But you have got a guarantee that on that line of seventeen miles you won’t run a special?—That is different.

31336. If you are going to put only one engine on you need not have black working. Don’t you think that is a somewhat unnecessary provision—is that unnecessary?—I would not go so far as that. It might be considered if they were going to relieve the line, to save the expense.

31337. Clearway.—I think Mr. Goodbody meant by his answer to my question this. On these little lines where there is very little traffic, the Board of Trade regulations applicable, say, to a London railway should not be exacted. That is what you mean?—Yes, but the question is too complicated for me.

31338. There should be some latitude?—Yes, some elasticity as regards small lines.

31339. As to the detail you don’t know?—No; I do not want to go into that at all.

Examined by Mr. SCUDLOR.

31340. You made one incidental observation directing attention to Sunday football—may I ask does that disturb business as much as the same game would on a week day?—It is not a question of the weekly playing at all. We have none on week days. I speak of the Midlands.

31341. You have football at the time that causes the least disturbance to business?—Yes. It is not that I complain about. It is not so much about the Sunday, but the month on Monday and Tuesday. They are away on Sunday, and a good number stay till Tuesday. Our whole week is piece-work.

31342. Their absence on week-days would be worse than on Sundays?—There is no football on week-days.

31343. You have it here, however, in its least disturbing form?—I have only brought it in as an instance as regards drink.

31344. They can drink any day. As to the Missions, do you think an occasional absence—may once in a number of years—on the part of workpeople who are attending to their religious interests, makes them worse workpeople?—I don’t like to go into that at all. I don’t want to bring in the religious question at all.

31345. You did mention it?—We don’t work as we like in the textile trade. Under the Factory Act we only work certain hours. There is no chativety about the Factory Act. We cannot open and close as we please. We must work between six o’clock and

six o’clock. But it would answer if we were to be allowed more elasticity under the Factory Act, and if it gave us leave to take an hour off at the beginning and work an hour longer in the evening.

31346. You now complain rather of the Factory Acts?—It is one of the difficulties we have to contend with. Of course the factory has been in existence a long time.

31347. My point rather was that a rare absence from work for religious purposes is no more harmful than the absence for secular recreation, now becoming so frequent in England and Scotland?—Of course, one of the difficulties with regard to textile industries is with us; there are so many of those Saints’ days, and we cannot keep the work in repair. We require to do large repairs occasionally, and our holidays are intermittent. For instance, take Friday week, and the first of November; it is a holiday, and we have to stop early on Saturday; it is only a five hour day.

31348. I see. Saints’ days in Ireland are not so numerous as days of absence for recreation in England and other countries?—Well, I am comparing it with Dundee. The holidays there may amount to more in the year, but they all come twice in the year, and if you have any big repairs you may do them. We have to keep a standing spare engine in our spinning mill; we have one that has never been running.

31349. Why in Scotland they absent themselves from business for a week together for purposes which it would be mild to term recreation?—Not in the textile industry.

31350. Does your financial proposal that the public—not the Government, the “Government” is only a way of expressing the fact that it is the public—that the public should lend at 3 per cent., does that relate only to the guaranteed lines?—No.

31351. Not so then?—I did not mean to allude to the guaranteed lines at all except to improve them.

31352. Well, you spoke of getting rid of the baronial guarantee?—Yes.

31353. I apprehend, therefore, your proposal is to lend to the lines that are subject to baronial guarantee?—My idea was that this portion of the baronial guarantee would have to be handed over. There are none of them profitable lines as far as I know. They would have to be handed over as a free grant, with the condition that they should be developed; the existing lines should be developed, not more railways.

31354. Do you suppose that the Government should lend at 3 per cent. to all the railways?—If there was an arrangement made to have two systems, and if it became necessary.

31355. To enable them to make improvements?—Yes.

31356. But improvements are now made out of revenue or by the creation of Preference Stock, are they not?—

31357. Lord Parnell.—Or Debentures?

31358. Mr. Scudlor.—I call that Preference Stock is that so?—The improvements must now be made from revenue or Preference Stock. That depends upon whether they can raise revenue or raise Preference Stock.

31359. Yes; either out of revenue or by borrowing, by the creation of Preference Stock or Debentures?—Yes.

31360. You see, if the Government lent at 3 per cent. for improvements, the company would have the revenue which would otherwise have been used for improvements, or interest on capital, and that revenue would be available for the payment of increased dividends. You would ask the public to give a subscription for the payment of increased dividends, which is hardly a practicable proposal. In the case of amalgamation into two systems, you would have the rates as they are, and allow the increased profits to be disposed of at the discretion of the railway companies—the increased profits due to concentration of working?—Would the increased profits be so large as that, do you think?

31361. Whatever they might be. Do you agree that the working of one system would be far cheaper than the working of seven major systems, and a number of minor systems, as at present?—Sir George Finlay said it would be 20 per cent. at least?—20 per cent. of the receipts?

31350. Of the working expenses?—The working expenses are about £2,500,000.

31351. About £2,500,000?—That is one-fifth of it.

31352. It would be half a million?—Well, that is a matter of opinion.

31353. Yes, certainly. I am endeavouring to shew your opinion, and even if you put it at half that figure, it would still be very considerable?—If it was £100,000 it would be very large.

31354. Opinions vary, and I regard you as an expert, but it seems to me that the weight of opinion measures it at a far larger sum. I was sorry to hear you say, in answer to my friend, Colonel Peck, that it is doubtful whether any revision of rates would stimulate industries in Ireland. Of course you will admit that the agricultural output, at any rate, may be indefinitely stimulated by reduction of the rates of export?—Are you speaking of cattle now?

31355. I am speaking of the whole agricultural output?—Agricultural produce.

31356. Yes, everything that comes from the land. What do you say?—Well, supposing the total receipts are nearly £3,000,000.

31357. The gross receipts are over four millions?—Well, supposing you reduce that 25 per cent., that gives you £900,000.

31358. I do not suggest that you need reduce it by so much. We are only speaking now of the export rates, not of the whole receipts for traffic?—Would you carry cattle exported to Liverpool at a cheaper rate from Limerick Junction to Dublin than to Dublin for the Dublin market?

31359. No, but in view of the fact that the imports of food into Great Britain have been powerfully stimulated in the last twenty years by very favourable arrangements between Continental exporters and the British railways for carrying food supplies into Great Britain, I suggest if Irish export rates were reduced, so as to put the Irish producer on a more equal footing with the Continental producer the result would be to develop all Irish agricultural produce for the British market?—Of course, in regard to cattle, it is America and the Argentine and Australia that are the competitors, not the Continent.

31360. Well, speaking of all foreign agricultural imports?—Speaking of competition from foreign countries, it must be remembered that many of the staples are under Government control.

31361. Yes; but a great part of the food to which I refer to comes from the Continent. The butter traffic and eggs and poultry come from the Continent. And, even as regards the meat traffic, whatever effect the pressure of rates upon Irish exports will give them is correspondingly free access to the British markets?—Well, suppose you reduce the rates?—I don't know exactly what the rates are—but take the rates on fat cattle from Limerick Junction to Manchester, which is somewhere about 15s. a head, there is the Manchester rate, which is probably 3s., and the cross-Channel rate 4s., which makes 7s., out of 15s., which only leaves 8s. from Limerick Junction to Dublin. If you reduce that 25 per cent. you reduce it by a sum a little over 2s.

31362. I take the evidence generally of those connected with the Irish export trade who have been before this Commission, and they say they have found that the rates from the Continent from foreign countries, have led in food supplies and filled the British markets, and, on the other hand, have found that the rates from the Continent placed that if the Irish rates were revised and made easier for them it would have an important effect upon their trade. Does your argument, your general view, "too late," apply at all to that?—I look upon the cattle industry and the agricultural industry as indigenous to the country. When speaking of Irish industries I was speaking of those not indigenous, like the textile industry.

31363. I began with agriculture, and I want to get your views as to whether a revision of export rates, in a sense favourable to the producer, would help to recover some of the ground Ireland has lost in the British markets and lost to Continental and other countries. The traders think it would. What

do you think?—I think a good deal of it is visionary. For instance, 2s. a head won't make a great deal of difference in the cattle trade.

31364. There is very keen competition, and it may happen that even small reductions will better the position. The men who are trading every day think it would?—They are always glad to get any reduction they can.

31365. It would improve their position?—Well, if you take the fat cattle going to Manchester, three years old, and you only save half-a-crown or three shillings, it is only at the rate of a shilling a year.

31366. I should be inclined to think we might take it from the men engaged in the trade, that if facilities given for the introduction of Continental food supplies into the British market have benefited the foreign producer, so also if something analogous was done in the case of Ireland similar results would follow. To come to the milling trade, I think you said the rate on flour is lower than the rate on wheat in some cases?—I gave two instances. They are not coincidences.

31367. At any rate flour is in the same class as wheat?—Yes.

31368. And that is rather an anomalous thing?—Yes.

31369. You are aware, I am sure, that we import more flour into Ireland than we produce in Ireland?—Oh, yes, I am quite aware of that. You are importing nearly £3,000,000 worth.

31370. Yes; the flour produced from wheat imported is not so great in quantity as the flour imported?—No. The deficit from flour imported would produce 70,000 tons of oil if the flour was made in this country.

31371. The flour produced from wheat imported is not so much as the flour directly imported. Now, flour and wheat are in the same class—that is, the manufactured article is carried at as low a rate as the raw material. Is that so?—Yes.

31372. Now, suppose a revision of that, and suppose that wheat were carried to the Irish mills at a rate more favourable than the import rates for flour, would that not stimulate the milling of wheat, and increase the output of Irish flour?—Yes; that is rather what I am leading you to say, that the raw material should be carried at a lower rate than the manufactured article.

31373. The importers of flour are so favoured by Government low through rates that they can send their flour to any part of Ireland at a lower rate than the Irish miller has to pay for his flour. Suppose the inland rates on flour were reduced, would that not have the tendency to increase the production of Irish flour?—The reduction on the rate of wheat?

31374. The reduction of the import rate upon wheat or of the inland rate on the transport of flour?—It would be quite sufficient to reduce the rate on the raw material, but I would not go any further, as you seem to suggest.

31375. There is now an import of flour to the value of £3,000,000 a year that can be produced at home?—Well, I mentioned there the conservative policy of the railways in the past, and it was a great deal owing to the conservative policy of the railways in the past. Of course, they cannot now raise the rates, and if they do anything it should be in favour of trying to carry the raw material at a lower rate.

31376. They are carrying the flour in at a lower rate, very much lower than the rate the Irish producer has to pay to send his product over the Irish lines—the inland rates do not give him fair play against the low import rate for the competing product.

31377. Have you ever examined closely the tables of imports in the return of the Department of Agriculture?—I have casually glanced over some of them in the papers.

31378. They amount at present to some £56,000,000 a year. If you look through this list of imports you will find in it many articles of common use and consumption, which require no elaborate process to produce them; would you not think it well that conditions of transit, favourable conditions, should be established to see whether these simple things could

Oct 16, 1907.

Mr. Robert Goodbody, M.P. (Member of the Committee, Mr. F. Goodbody, Clerk.)

The anticipated increase of local receipts from revised export rates suggested as, visionary.

The inclusion of flour in the same class as wheat an injury to the home milling trade.

reduction in the rate of wheat.

The value of the Irish exports (Department of Agriculture returns).

496, 18, 1937.

Mr. Robert Goodbody, M.P. (Member J. & L. F. Goodbody, Clonsilla).

The effect of placing the inland rates on a parity with the export rates, on encouragement of Irish industries.

not be produced in Ireland for Irish markets. At least should it not be open to those who think it could be done to make the attempt to satisfy their minds?—Well, if you lower the rate on one thing you will have to lower it generally.

31379. Wherever it is found that an inland rate is higher, and thereby interferes with the production, do you think it ought to be brought to something like a parity with the through rate?—It would be a financial question.

31380. Is not carriage an element in the cost of production; and if you lower the cost of production do you not improve the market?—The influence of carriage is very little on a high-class article.

31381. Whenever it is found that an inland rate is higher, and does interfere with local production, should it be brought into something like parity with the through rate with which it is in competition; that is the suggestion I would make to you?—I don't think that the through rate should be lower than the local rate.

31382. It is, in fact, usually lower in proportion to the services rendered?—In some cases it is.

31383. If, as you say, it is a very difficult thing to alter through rates, perhaps it would be easier to revise Irish local rates, and place them on an equal footing with the through rates?—It would become a financial question.

31384. Is not the cost of carriage an element in the cost of production; does it not affect the price?—It does, to some extent.

31385. If you lower the price of the article does it not widen the market of the person who produces it?—It would on some small things, but it would be a small percentage on a high-priced article.

31386. When I find men practically acquainted with the subject come forward to testify that the reduction which has been mentioned would make all the difference between a languishing and a thriving trade, I am inclined to pay great attention to them. Yours is really the only firm in Ireland engaged in the jute trade?—Yes.

31387. You import the raw material?—Yes.

31388. And very naturally you would like to get a lower rate on the jute?—I am not complaining about the rate.

31389. You would like lower rates on raw material, including the jute. You say so in your abstract?—I do not allude to the jute.

31390. Of course it is included?—Yes.

31391. You do not import the yarn as they do in Belfast?—No.

31392. There are no jute goods imported into Ireland?—There are the Calcutta goods.

31393-4. These returns cannot be put into competition with your words, but I quote them to explain my question. They are the returns of the Department. They state that the import of jute goods altogether was of the value of £125 in 1904, and £338 in 1905. Is there a considerable import?—We do that much ourselves practically in one week.

31395. Is there a considerable import competing with you in Ireland?—Yes, but it is all Calcutta goods with us. They compete with a rather lower class of goods than we have.

31396. They come from very far away—from Calcutta?—Yes.

31397. Owing to your strong position, paying £8,000 a year in freight, you are able to take up a position of detraction in regard to rates?—We never took up a position of detraction to the railways, except practically to give an ultimatum, that we would have to close at one time.

31398. Yes, an ultimatum. There is no more effectual detraction than an ultimatum, if you have the power to enforce it. It was effected?—It was at that time. That was a good many years ago.

31399. Have you special rates?—We have a cheap jute rate. There are the same rates all over the line.

31400. Owing to your formidable position, and owing to the freedom of action which enabled you to say to the railway—"We will take our industry away," you have obtained special rates, with which you are satisfied?—Yes.

31401. You are in a very fortunate position. You are in quite a unique position?—Yes; but we are the only jute spinners in the country.

31402. Even though you were the only jute spinners, unless the railway believed your threat was real, and that you might have taken away your industry altogether, they would not have given you special rates?—We have always our object has been to be on friendly terms with the railway.

31403. Still, friendly or unfriendly, when they believed you might remove your industry they said—"We had better have the traffic at low rates than not at all." If they had not believed in your threat, and your capacity to give it effect, the fact that you were the only jute spinners would not have enabled you to enforce it. Now, surely, one is your fortunate position, holding a position of control in regard to the cost of freight, ought to be able to open his mind to the case of the ordinary manufacturer or trader in Ireland who finds himself, as he declares, hampered by the low through rates into the country, and who says home trade could be stimulated and extended in the country if he could secure some reasonable revision of the inland rates. Surely one in your position can see that there is in that case something deserving the attention of the legislature?—I do not know if it is some specific case you are alluding to.

31404. We have put the millers' case. We have the case of furniture. There is the case of stone for building, there is the case of slates, and there are numerous other industries that a reasonable reduction in rates would have the effect of stimulating. If I went through the evidence I could give you a long catalogue of them. Do not the conditions in relation to these industries entitle you that if you diminished the cost of production by a reasonable diminution of the cost of carriage, you would enable Irish producers to compete more effectively than they can at present?—It would all depend upon what the amount of reduction was.

31405. Assuming that the amount of reduction be sufficient to affect the price in such quantities as are usually sold, do you think it would have a practical effect upon the market?—You could hardly reduce a few shilling rate sufficiently to make a very large difference in the selling value.

31406. It might depend upon the number of tons to be sold. I think you will admit looking generally at it, without endeavouring to apply at this stage too minute a scrutiny, that if importers are helped, by low through rates, to the disadvantage of the producers in the country, it stands to reason that if the rates for their products—the Irish producers—are made to correspond, if they are made as much in their favour as import rates are in favour of the importer, it must necessarily give them better access to their own home markets?—It would be a very large question—a very wide question. I suppose you would not go so far as to make it a mileage rate?

31407. No, indeed; I should think not. But, if you have fifty-five millions of imports in this country, by the system of very low through rates in operation, and the home producer, struggling and handicapped by relatively higher rates (and that is the evidence), surely the local rate in Ireland for Irish products should be placed on a parity with the import through rate, and that would be an important improvement of the position of the home producer. There is no need to go any more into detail; I only put the broad proposition to you.

31408. (Addressing—I think Mr. Goodbody has admitted that some time ago. The local rates ought to be made comparable with the through rates. That is all, thank you, Mr. Goodbody.

The operations of the Clonsilla jute factory.

The imports of jute.

The freight paid by the firm, and their attitude towards the Railway Company as to rates.

Mr. W. J. O'SULLIVAN, examined by the CHAIRMAN

Oct. 18, 1907

31409. Are you President of the Cork and South of Ireland Commercial Travellers' Association?—Yes.

31410. Now, we had a gentleman representing the Commercial Travellers' Association the other day. Did you read his evidence?—Yes.

31411. Do you agree with what he said?—Yes, altogether.

31412. Then you are quite prepared to support the evidence he gave on behalf of the commercial travellers of this country?—Yes.

31413. Is your association as large a one as the other gentleman represented?—No. It has a membership of about a hundred.

31414. But these hundred commercial travellers must be identified with a great many industries in Ireland?—Yes. Some of them are manufacturers.

31415. Now, what have you to complain about that was not brought under our notice by the other witness?—The want of reasonable connections at junctions on the Great Southern and Western Railway system particularly.

31416. That is a general grievance?—Yes. For instance, the 3.40 train from Clonmel, ex Waterford at 2.35, calling at Clonmel and Cork, and getting to the Limerick Junction at 4.40. Passengers for Cork are damped down for 1½ hours before they get a train for Cork. The 3 o'clock train from Dublin comes and takes them. There is a train leaving Dublin at 12.30, which stops short at the Limerick Junction. Our complaint is that this train does not run through to Mallow, when a connection can be made at once for Cork. That would obviate a delay at Limerick junction of 1½ hours, and it would also obviate a delay at Charleville which passengers for Cork have. They leave Limerick at 5.20, arriving at Charleville at 6.30, and they have to wait for this three o'clock train from Dublin, which means an hour's delay on a cold, bleak station, which is very painful, in winter especially. Now, if the train that I speak of, leaving Dublin at 12.30, were to run through to Mallow, it would relieve the congestion that exists on the three o'clock train from Dublin.

31417. What do you mean by the congestion?—I mean congestion of the third class carriages in particular.

31418. Do you mean that the train is full?—Packed from the Limerick Junction down, and it is very uncomfortable travelling in third class carriages.

31419. You would then obviate the delay at the Limerick Junction, and get into Cork an hour later?—Yes, at 6.45 instead of 5.35. It would mean only running a train from Limerick Junction to Mallow.

31420. What is the distance?—About 35 miles.

31421. Have you represented that to the railway company?—Yes, repeatedly.

31422. Were any good reasons given by them?—They "could not see their way."

31423. Mr. Smith (G.R. and W.R.)—The distance is thirty-eight miles.

31424. Chairman—Now, we have that, as regards the delays at the Junction. You have no general complaint that the trains are unexpedient?—Oh, yes.

31425. Do you mean to say as a rule or occasionally?—It is a substantial grievance?—It is a very great grievance. For instance, the connections at the Junction are often lost by commercial travellers leaving Cork. I can give you an instance. A commercial traveller leaving Mallow last month, going to Abberley, left Mallow at eight o'clock in the morning. The train, supposed to arrive at Maryborough at eleven, was three-quarters of an hour late. Owing to that fact the train for Abberley had left Maryborough before it arrived. The next train to Abberley was two o'clock in the evening. My friend tried the whole town of Maryborough to get a car to drive over; but there were some military manœuvres going on in the neighbourhood of the town that day, and he could not get a car. And the result was he lost his entire day's visit.

31426. Colonel Hutchison Fox—You only get manœuvres once in five or six years?—Well, it was very unfortunate for him you had them that year. Another case is this. Passengers in Cork waiting to go on the Limerick and Waterford section, the trains are often late, and when they arrive at the Limerick Junction the train is often gone. Take the train that runs in connection

with the 2.20 from Cork. The train leaving Cork at 2.20 a.m. is due to arrive at the Limerick Junction at 9.9. The train I speak of—that for Cahir, Clonmel, and Carrick on Suir, is supposed to leave at 9.20; but constantly it happens that this 2.20 train from Cork, when it arrives at the Limerick Junction is twenty or twenty-five minutes late, and the train has left the Limerick Junction for these stations. That leaves the passengers who want to go to Cahir, Clonmel, and Carrick on Suir on the Limerick Junction for a period of three hours. That then should exist at a junction where one company, owns the two systems is certainly a very serious matter of complaint, and a great cause of grievance, in the loss of time that it causes to commercial travellers. The Kerry train service from Cork is insufficient. For instance, the first train from Cork to Kenmare is 6.30 a.m., due at Kenmare at 1.15, no train leaving Kenmare until 7.30 p.m., arriving at Cork 11.30. So that a passenger from Cork to Kenmare and returning has to devote from 9.20 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. for this journey of 74 miles. We consider that this important town, only 74 miles distant, and having large trading connections with Cork, should have a connection by first morning train, Cork to Tralee, leaving Cork at 8.30. Great inconvenience is caused to Cork travellers that the 1.50 at Tralee does not call at Gortalea, Farranfene, Rathmore, or Millicent, though Dublin passengers or passengers south of Limerick have the privilege of getting trains stopped.

31427. Chairman.—Of course, you have reported this to the railway companies?—Yes.

31428. Now, what about third-class carriages?—We complain of the want of heating arrangements in cold weather and over long journeys, which we have to take occasionally. It is rather dismal to have to sit in a third-class carriage for a length of time—for some hours—without any heating arrangements whatsoever.

31429. You mean foot-warmers?—Yes, or the other system.

31430. Then, you suggest lavatory accommodation?—Yes, the absence of lavatory accommodation. We suggest that on all trains there should be lavatory accommodation.

31431. Where do you find lavatory accommodation on all trains?—The Great Southern and Western Railway Company have it on their main line, and there is no reason why they should not have it on their branch lines. Take the line from Mallow to Cahirciveen.

31432. But on a branch line lavatory accommodation is not required so much as on a main line?—It is absolutely necessary in a journey between such places as Mallow and Cahirciveen. The distance is long, and the district is largely patronised by tourists; and there is an immense traffic going over that particular portion of the line. Very often there are carriages with no lavatory.

31433. But I suppose all the new carriages are fitted with them?—But, as a rule, they are left on the main line and not given to the branch I speak of. Take the journey from Farranfene to Cahirciveen—a distance of fifty miles; sitting for two hours in a train without lavatory accommodation, is rather uncomfortable and out of date now.

31434. I don't know about refreshment?—It is certainly not up to date now.

31435. Then, you mention waiting-rooms?—Yes; third-class waiting-rooms. There are some stations on the Great Southern and Western Railway system where the accommodation for passengers waiting at the stations is very scant indeed. Tipperary Station, for instance—there is not a single chair in the waiting-rooms, which is as large as this room. There are benches at the side of the walls—two forms. These rooms are disgracefully kept—dirty and dirty.

31436. That is a general waiting-room, I suppose?—Yes. At Cahir there is no waiting-room whatsoever. There is "waiting-room" written up, but they are used as offices, parcels office, etc., for the accommodation of the station staff.

31437. Now, we have had a great amount of evidence about second-class fares. You agree, I suppose, that they are out of proportion to the third?—Yes, my association asked me to improve that upon the Commission very strongly. The proportion averages from 35 to 75 per cent in the difference between second and third class fares.

Mr. W. J. O'Sullivan, President of the Cork and South of Ireland Commercial Travellers' Association.

Inadequate passenger train service in the Kerry district (Great Southern and Western Railway).

Complaints as to the lack of third class carriages, and the provision of lavatory accommodation.

A general impression is the waiting room accommodation required.

The disproportionate second class and third class fares.

Oct. 15, 1907.

Mr. W. J. O'Sullivan,
President of
the Cork and
South of
Ireland Com-
mercial
Travellers'
Association.

Proposed
revision of
the second-
class fares on
a basis of 20
per cent.
over third-
class.

31433. Where do you get 35 per cent.?—We compute it from 30 per cent., I should say.

31433. But where do you get the 30 per cent.?—I can give you an instance.

31440. Are you certain about that?—Yes. On the Great Southern and Western Railway, I mean.

31441. On the Great Southern and Western Railway they have instances of 30 per cent.?—I think so.

31442. We should like to have that?—I might mention that it is for a rather short distance, but I can let you have it. The Great Southern and Western Railway have not changed the fares that existed on the late Waterford and Limerick Railway, which worked out in some cases from 35 per cent.

31443. Well, what your association says is that the second-class fares should be approximately settled on some similar basis to what prevails in England?—Yes, anything up to a difference of 30 per cent. And I am perfectly satisfied 60 per cent. of the commercial travellers, instead of going third-class, would be glad if they got a difference of 20 per cent. only in the second-class.

31444. 20 or 25?—We consider 20 quite high enough. There are many reasons for this. In the first instance it would relieve the competition of third-class carriages, next, it would, on long journeys, be pleasurable for us to travel, which is not the fact now, and it would obviate the difficulty which we have of travelling, as on market days. It is most uncomfortable; third-class carriages are so crowded. They are more like baggage vans, crowded with groceries and provisions of all kinds. People come in with these things after making their purchases on Saturday at the different stations on the line.

31445. Then, on all grounds, there is no question it would be an advantage to the members of your association at any rate, and they would avail themselves of it if the second-class were anything about 30 per cent. above the third?—Yes. And, instead of the revenue being decreased, in my opinion it would be increased.

31446. That is, as far as your travellers are concerned?—And the general public also, I should say.

31447. They would follow?—Yes.

31448. Now, give us some cases of the second and third-class fares?—Cork to Ennis, third-class fare, 4s. 3d.; second-class fare, 7s. 3d., a difference of 75 per cent. From Cahirciveen to Cork, third-class fare, 8s.; second-class fare, 14s. 8d. That is a difference of 63 per cent. From Cork to Carrick-on-Suir, third-class fare, 6s. 10d.; second, 11s. 6d., a difference of 67 per cent.

31449. Take one of 75 per cent. Take one on the Cork and Brandon?—That existed on the Cork and Brandon Railway, but since we prepared this evidence the Cork and Brandon Railway have dropped their second-class fares and carriages. They have dropped the second-class altogether, which we consider rather a retrograde movement, and they have reduced the first-class to under what the second-class fares were before. But still the great difference that exists between third and first-class, between 50 and 60 per cent., is prohibitive.

31450. The second-class fares are abolished, and they made first what the second used to be?—Lower than what the second-class were.

31451. Still lower?—Yes, still lower, but still the difference is between 50 and 60 per cent. above the third. And, in the opinion of those travelling over the line, that is rather a retrograde movement, because that only relieves a certain class, that is the moneyed class who would go first class no matter what the price was and the people who would travel second are deprived of the opportunity of doing so. They will not go first because the railway fare is so very high in comparison with the third. There is another item in connection with travellers taking luggage.

There are some travellers, representing drapery houses, and out of a journey of seven weeks they send only two weeks on the Great Southern and Western Railway system. It would not pay them to take a pass for their luggage, which is £20 per annum, for this short time. The other railways, the Cork and Brandon and the Cork and Maunabo have a different system. Their system is, you take a first-class ticket for your self to your destination and another first-class ticket for your luggage. Some men who travel on the Great Southern and Western Railway for a couple of weeks out of their seven weeks would think it rather hard to pay at the rate of £20 a year, and

I know a number of them who actually send their cases by common car and go the journey themselves by railway, on a third-class fare. Whereas if the Great Southern and Western Railway issued to these men either weekly passes for their luggage or charge them as other companies do, it would be an advantage both for the company and for the commercial traveller.

31452. But surely the luggage ought to be limited. Do you mean that any quantity of luggage should be taken by commercial men?—Well, the company allow us to take 12 cwt., according to the passes they issue. I may as well say 12 cwt. is not sufficient. The more samples we take the more goods we sell, and the railway company benefit thereby.

31453. The bulk of what you carry is samples?—It is samples that we take only.

31454. Twelve cwt. of samples, is that so?—Yes; I take sixteen cwt. myself.

31455. Of drapery?—Yes.

31456. At any rate, you say that it is not unreasonable to suggest that you should be able to take your luggage with you on the Great Southern under an arrangement similar in effect to that on the Cork and Brandon?—Yes, that is for travellers spending a short time on the line. I myself do not object to pay £20, because I spend five weeks out of the seven on the Great Southern and Western Railway. But I speak of those who spend only two weeks.

31457. Smaller men?—They are not exactly smaller, but they have a greater trade over the Cork and Brandon Railway.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

31458. Your complaints relate entirely to one system—the Great Southern and Western Railway, including its junctions with other systems?—Yes.

31459. One of the remedies suggested in the evidence is an amalgamation of the companies, so that there should be three or four systems left. Now, if that were done, one of the three or four systems left would be the Great Southern and Western Railway, with the smaller southern lines absorbed into it. Would that go in any way to meet your complaint?—I scarcely think it would in the matter of the connections, as I have given instances—such as Limerick Junction and Mallow.

31460. You think it would leave them pretty much as they are?—Yes, in the matter of connections.

31461. And you say you come to support and endorse the evidence given on behalf of the Commercial Travellers' Association?—Yes.

31462. Does your Association agree that the best solution in the public interest would be to take over these lines and work them as a united system, under a representative body?—Yes.

31463. You adopt, then, the principles of public purchase, representative authority, and expert management?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. A'WORTH.

31464. Do you work about Waterford, Tralee, and Limerick?—Yes, I go to Tralee, and as far as Carrigrohane, and into Limerick.

31465. Are things better or worse than they were before the amalgamation of the Waterford and Limerick with the Great Southern and Western?—There is little or no improvement.

31466. There is just one other point. You get your point fairly enough as to these irritating delays and want of connections at stations. But, presently, the railway companies have some reason for not complying with your wishes? It is not pure selfishness. Do you ever get a talk with them about it? You have written a complaint, I take it?—Yes.

31467. And you get a letter, I suppose, containing a civil answer that it would be looked into; and then another civil answer saying that they regret that they are not able to comply with your wishes?—Yes.

31468. Do you know the reasons why they are not able?—No, they never gave us a reason why they could not extend that train from Limerick Junction to Mallow.

31469. You never got a talk with them about it?—No.

31470. Do you think that, if you had opportunities of having discussions on these subjects, it would tend

The abolition
of second-
class fares
on the Cork
and Brandon
Railway.

A more
liberal policy
on regulations
concerning
of travellers'
samples
advocated.

to get refunds in some cases, and show in other cases why they could not be given?—Undoubtedly. And I may mention, as regards that, that one of the members of the Irish Commercial Travellers' Association did have an interview with Sir William Goulding with reference to the luggage question, and easier relations have existed since then. That upholds the principle of your suggestion, which I approve of.

31471. Personal discussion across the table would smooth matters a good deal?—Yes.

31472. And, whether the railways be in public or private hands, you would think it would be a good thing to have some organised arrangement of meeting between the customers of the railway and the managers?—A very good idea.

31473. You know that that does happen in Germany, and is a great success?—Yes. The railway companies, as a rule, are reasonable to commercial travellers. They treat us rather decently as regards the week-end—Friday to Monday—tickets. And when occasionally a member of the Commercial Travellers' Association got speaking to one of the managers of the railway easier relations have resulted.

31474. When you are refused facilities that seem to you reasonable, and you do not know why you are refused, it is not satisfactory?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HERRING: Pos.

31475. Your Association gets the benefit of a

special fare, does it not?—We get Friday to Monday tickets at single fares. The ordinary public get it at a fare and an eighth.

31476. So that in that way they did make a concession to you?—Yes.

31477. When you speak of the second class fare, and the disparities under the existing system, you know that the railway returns show a decrease in the second class?—Yes.

31478. And you attribute that to the high fares and the bad accommodation?—Yes.

31479. And do you think that a reform in that direction would be largely availed of by third class passengers?—Undoubtedly. A large number would travel second class, and the revenue of the railway companies would be considerably increased.

31480. You only speak in reference to the Great Southern. You have no experience of other lines?—The Cork and Brandon is a case where they have dropped the second class, and the Cork and Macroom is another.

31481. But your complaints as to the bad station accommodation and so on, do they apply to those systems also?—No; I cannot say that.

31482. Then your chief grievance in that respect is confined to the Great Southern?—Yes.

31483. And not to the smaller branch systems in the South of Ireland?—No.

Oct. 14, 1897.

Mr. W. J. O'Sullivan,
President of
the Cork and
South of
Ireland Commercial
Travellers'
Association.

The probability of a reduction in second class fares, increasing the company's revenue.

Complaints as to the unsatisfactory station accommodation on the Cork and Southern Railway.

The Commission then adjourned till the following evening, at eleven o'clock.

FIFTY-SECOND PUBLIC SITTING.—SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19TH, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, Bart., Chairman; Right Hon. LORD PIERCE, P.C.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHESON FOX, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Mr. J. J. MAGUIRE, Solicitor, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Oct. 19, 1907

Mr. J. J. Maguire,
Solicitor,
Dublin.

32484. Mr. J. J. Maguire. You are a solicitor in Dublin?—Yes.

32485. You have made the railway question a study?—Yes, I have. I am a shareholder in some of the railways, and it is my own interest to study it.

32486. Of course you are acquainted with the Irish railway system generally?—I am.

32487. Do you consider it is different from the railway system of England and Scotland?—I should say that it is; much the same with regard to arrangements, and, of course, there is a difference in regard to rates. The principle of private ownership prevails in both countries—

The Commission considers Ireland and for different treatment to England, as regards railway policy.

32488. I am now speaking with regard to traffic carried on the railways?—As regards the traffic it is perfectly different, because the two countries are entirely different. Ireland is wholly an agricultural country, with the exception of Belfast and that district in the North of Ireland. When you consider the case of England and Scotland—I take the two countries together. Take England—of course it is the centre of the commerce of the world, and take Ireland, a country with practically no commerce—no commerce to compare with England—anyone would say that a system which would suit the one country would be utterly unsuitable to the other, because in Ireland, in certain districts, you have to develop traffic. The country is poor and the means of paying railway rates are not the same as in England, and, secondly, the private ownership system, in my opinion—

32489. One minute. We will make that the subject of a separate question. The Irish railway system generally began about 1820?—I think most of the Irish railways, as far as I can judge from my reading in the matter, were constructed about 1845 or 1850. I am wrong, perhaps, with regard to some of them.

Mr. Drummond's recommendation to the Government to construct the railways of Ireland in the "forties."

32490. Do you remember the then Chief Secretary making some proposals?—It is only a matter of historical reading. Mr. Thomas Drummond—in my reading of history of the time—I found that Mr. Drummond, who was then Chief Secretary, proposed, as the railway system was then extending throughout the Continent—it commenced in England and spread to Belgium—he proposed (and, perhaps, he was one of the ablest Under Secretaries that Ireland ever had, although he was not an Irishman) that the Government should undertake the construction of railways in Ireland.

32491. It was not accepted?—It was not accepted from various causes, because unfortunately, in the country it appears to be, as far as politics are concerned, the hotbeds and shambles of the different political parties at the time, and the reasons may have been against it. At all events, I believe at the time, judging by my reading of the matter, it was favourably entertained but it was laid aside for some reason or other.

The Irish Railways constructed by private enterprise, aided by the State in some cases.

32492. And the railways were then provided by private parties?—They were; but, with regard to some of the lines, they could not be constructed without State aid. Taking that portion of the Great Northern Railway from Dublin to Dundalk, I believe portion of that line was constructed with State aid.

32493. That is something new. I have not heard that before. Dundalk to Dublin is a separate undertaking?—That is my recollection. I think it was the Dublin and Dundalk.

32494. That was a separate undertaking?—It may have been.

32495. It was before the amalgamation?—I know from my reading of the matter, that several lines could not be constructed without State aid.

32496. Mr. Ascroft.—They got a Government loan? Yes.

32497. And has it been paid off?—Yes; I refer to the exception.

32498. Mr. Sexton.—There were loans and also grants?—Yes, loans, I think, principally—loans and grants in some of the poor districts, but I know there were large sums advanced.

32499. And in the main, what Mr. Acworth says is correct, that the money advanced out of the British Treasury were repaid?—Yes.

32500. Chairman.—Have you any idea how many Boards there are in Ireland?—The conclusion is forty, and, of course, you include the Boards of a large number of railway companies.

32501. That includes all of them?—Every one.

32502. Do you think it would be to the advantage of Ireland if all these railways were amalgamated into one system?—Unquestionably.

32503. And do you agree with the proposed State purchase of these undertakings?—I think it is the only solution of the difficulty.

32504. What, in your judgment, would be the advantage of the acquisition by the State of the Irish railways?—In the first place you would not have, as at present, forty different systems in a poor country, and a small country too, and then, these different railway systems have antagonistic interests—they serve certain districts—and, of course, the directors of a railway in a particular district naturally considers the interests of that particular district, and of their own shareholders, and certain districts must be better served than others, and certain districts, without any facilities or facilities of a very poor description, and then, if you had one railway system throughout the whole of Ireland it would be a great advantage to the country in this way—that poor districts would be helped. At the present time it is impossible to get capital for the poor districts, because capitalists would naturally consider immediate return for their money, but if the Government worked the whole railway system in this country they would naturally help the poor districts and they would have a chance, which they have not at the present day, of developing traffic and getting facilities for getting to the markets of the world, and would do away with the expensive system at the present time. Taking the experience of forty Boards and their territories and shreds, if you had one general system you would have great saving of expense. Nobody could doubt that.

32505. Those are the various reasons why it would be an advantage?—Saving of expense and uniformity of rates.

32506. Do you think that what we have heard so much about—proportional rates for imports—would exist?—They would not.

31507. To the advantage of Ireland?—Yes, because, in the first instance, the public authorities, representing the Irish people, and responsible to public opinion, could not, naturally, on account of public opinion, grant preferential rates, which are granted now, and you would not have the spectacle of railway companies granting preferential rates to imports and discouraging the native exporter.

31508. I suppose that you cannot expect the railway companies to make substantial reductions in rates?—I fail to see how they could do it at the present time, for this reason. They are private property—the property of the shareholders, and they must regard the interests of the shareholders, first of all. A public authority, having the railways of Ireland, would naturally regard the interests of the public. Of course the private railway companies are perfectly right in looking after the interests of the shareholders. What else would they do. Secondly, in the case of a proposed reduction of rates the first consideration would be the effect on the dividends. Then, if you attempted to reduce the rates you may take it merely as an experiment which might possibly increase the business of the railway company, but, at the same time, it might decrease the dividends, because the corresponding increase of business might not be equal to the expense incurred, and consequently it might be a loss.

31509. Mr. Scott.—There might be a decrease of net profit?—For some time, at all events, perhaps.

31510. Chairman.—Are you aware of the Trustee Act of 1825?—I am a solicitor, and I know it.

31511. You knew the object of the Act was to extend in 1825, and the object of the Act was to extend the list of investments of trustees. Before that the list of investments was rather restricted—consols and certain Government securities—and this Act therefore extended the list of investments to include debentures and preference stock of railway companies, provided the railway company paid a dividend of not less than 3 per cent. for ten years previously.

31512. Mr. Ascroft.—On the ordinary stock?—Yes, on the ordinary.

31513. Chairman.—If the ordinary stock was in property it would seriously affect the debenture and preference?—It would, undoubtedly.

31514. It would mean removal from the list?—Yes, and the result would be that debenture and preference and guaranteed stock of the railway company which reduced their ordinary dividend below 3 per cent. would cease to be a trustee security for a period of ten years, and unless the dividends were resumed and paid for ten years it would not be a trustee stock at all. The directors of any railway company, considering that fact, would naturally say, "If we reduce the rates probably the dividend will be reduced below 3 per cent., say, to 2½ per cent., and that would mean a perfect slump in the price of our debenture and guaranteed and preference stock, 3 per cent. or 4 per cent." The ordinary stock would go down, too, because they all hang together, and consequently I do not see how any Board of Directors would think of reducing the rates on account of those circumstances created by legislation.

31515. That is to say, under the present system you do not see that any great reduction can take place, and it would not be fair to the railway companies, by any legislation, to enforce it?—It would not be to the interests of the shareholders.

31516. You have been in Belgium?—I have.

31517. And you know that the railways there generally are the property of the State?—They are, with the exception of one portion of Belgium—about Longe.

31518. I said "generally"?—Yes.

31519. Are you of opinion that the prosperity of the country, in a great measure, is the result of State ownership of the railways?—I should say to a great extent.

31520. Are you aware of the passenger fares?—As far as my own experience goes—I only go on my own experience—passenger fares appear to be very moderate.

31521. Much cheaper than in Ireland or in England?—Much cheaper. You can get a circular ticket for the whole of Belgium for 25s., and that is cheap enough.

31522. And these cheap facilities for passengers, and the low rates for goods, tend to develop the country to a very large extent?—Undoubtedly.

31523. Do you know anything about Germany?—I want to make a remark about Belgium. I was reading the excellent work of Sir Emerson Tennant, written in the year 1836—he was a well-known authority in certain economic matters—and he had visited Belgium about 1835, and he says that Belgium then had set an example to other European countries in the way of State construction of railways.

31524. Mr. Scott.—That was before it was "the Clapham Junction of Europe"?—Yes, the railway system was only in its inception.

31525. Chairman.—What was the date?—1836.

31526. There were very few railways then?—He referred to the wisdom of the step taken by the Belgian Government.

31527. The same as Dr. Diamond did here?—Yes. If the same had been done here the results would have been, perhaps, to a great extent, the same.

31528. I suppose you are aware that Germany has State railways?—Oh, yes, there are State railways—a system of State railways, there is the Kingdom of Prussia at all events, which comprises the greater part of Germany.

31529. And they favour the export rates?—Yes.

31530. In fact do everything they can to encourage exports?—The Government helps the export trade in every way—not alone by low railway rates, but by bounties.

31531. I do not know that I need ask about the salary of the officials?—The working is very economical.

Examined by Mr. Scott.

31532. I wish to make as clear as possible the effect of the Trustee Act in creating an obstacle to the reduction of rates. It is a fact that one of the great lines in Ireland now pays an ordinary dividend of 3 per cent.—Yes.

31533. And another?—I think we might call it the greatest line, pays about 4 per cent.—Yes.

31534. Now your argument, as I understand it, is that if the directors of the line paying 3 per cent. were to grant reductions in the rates they could not expect to be recompensed immediately—they would have to wait for recompense, and wait a longer time for profit—and in the meantime the ordinary dividend would necessarily sink below 3 per cent.—Yes, and then the securities would cease to be trustee securities, and the damage is done. The law is that unless the railway has paid an ordinary dividend of 3 per cent. for ten successive years.

31535. Chairman.—I do not think that that is the law?—That is my view.

31536. Chairman.—Ten consecutive years?

31536a. Mr. Ascroft.—Yes, that is it.

Witness.—As a solicitor, I know.

31537. Mr. Scott.—The Stock Exchange Guide says that—"During the last ten years the following companies paid dividends of not less than 3 per cent. in any one year on their ordinary stock, and the debentures, rent charge, guaranteed, and preference issues may, therefore, be purchased under the Trustee Act of 1825." The payment of one dividend under 3 per cent. would break the succession?—Certainly.

31538. Then, in order to restore the pre-ordinary stocks to trustee security rank there would have to be a 3 per cent. dividend, occasionally, for ten years?—Yes.

31539. And then if there was another break, that would postpone it for another ten years?—Yes.

31540. And the immediate effect of one reduction below 3 per cent. would be that while, I suppose, trustees who had invested in the stock already might retain their stock, no trustees could further invest in it?—It would be illegal.

31541. The consequence would be a lack of purchasers for the stock, a great fall in its value and a sympathetic fall in the ordinary stock beyond that caused by the fall in the rate of the ordinary dividend?—Undoubtedly.

31542. You regard that as an insuperable obstacle to reductions of the rates?—Yes, insuperable.

31543. In the case of that line, and even in the case of a line paying about four per cent., which is the case with the greatest line, you think that reduction of rates would be too risky?—Too risky certainly, simply an experiment.

Oct. 19, 1907.

Mr. J. J. Maguire,
Solicitor,
Dublin.

The public benefits derived from State railways in Belgium and Germany.

The obstacles to the export trade given by the German Government by low railway rates and bounties.

The obstacle of the Trustee Act of 1825 to all-round reductions of rates under the existing Irish railway system.

The effect of a reduction in dividends on trustee stock below these percent.

Oct. 19, 1897.

Mr. J. J. Maguire, Raftery, Dublin.

The system of charging the cost of improvements, renewals, etc., to capital accounts condensed.

31544. It appears, therefore, that the operation of the Trustee Act does interfere a very serious obstacle in the way of reductions?—Undoubtedly.

31545. But if there were a public system, with public stocks for a united system of railways, you would apprehend no such difficulty?—There could not be under a public system.

31546. Let us take another question. Are you aware of the system in Ireland and England (and, no doubt, in other countries, but certainly in these), of charging the cost of renewals and other works which do not bring in an increased revenue, to capital account?—Yes, it is most reprehensible.

31547. Most reprehensible?—Yes.

31548. To put it plainly, charging these works to capital account means paying for them out of borrowed money?—Certainly.

31549. And raising the money by the creation of pre-ordinary stock?—Yes.

31550. Unless there is an extension of net revenue the creation of these pre-ordinary stocks reduces the interest of the ordinary shareholders?—Undoubtedly it depreciates the value of the investment—very addition to the preference and guaranteed stock and debentures.

31551. The interest on the borrowed money—for these renewals—comes out of the fund till then available for the ordinary dividends?—Certainly.

31552. I am not contending the necessity of the works but only suggesting to you that unless there is an extension of net revenue, the continuance of this practice must necessarily diminish the interest of ordinary shareholders?—There is no question of it.

31553. And would you say, if it is continued long enough, that interest will be extinguished?—If it is continued at the same rate as for several years past the interest will be very small.

31554. Do you see any reason for anticipating, on any Irish line with which you are acquainted, an extension of either revenue or net profit under the present system?—I do not see any at present, but we cannot tell what the future will bring forth; but, taking the present conditions—

31555. Taking the present conditions—foreign competition, competition, and the absence of manufactures?—Yes.

31556. Then it would seem that the practice of charging these expenses to the capital account, and gradually encroaching upon the reserve left for ordinary dividends does threaten the interest of ordinary shareholders with diminution of value, and ultimately with extinction?—Undoubtedly.

31557. Especially in lines paying three per cent., or thereabout on the ordinary?—Yes.

31558. Well, now, suppose, for any reason a company could not issue new securities and had to take the cost of these works to which I have referred out of revenue, would not that, immediately, in the case of certain lines bring the dividend below three per cent., and cause the disaster you have described?—It would, undoubtedly, because they would have to provide for the ordinary dividend, and if they are reduced below three per cent. it ceases to be a trustee security, no matter what the cause may be.

31559. Would you say that the public, if they owned the railways and worked them in a united system, could, by reason of the saving on purchase, and saving also in the united working, make a better hand at running the lines than the companies can ever do?—I am inclined to think they would. That is my opinion. Certainly they could not do much worse than the present companies.

31560. Would you say that the scarce the shareholders can transfer to the public the better for the shareholders?—Undoubtedly.

31561. When you speak of State purchase do you mean purchase by the British Government, and control by a British State Department?—I would not have any control by a British State Department, but that it be controlled in the interests of the country.

31562. You are, perhaps, aware that the Government, according to a party of their own selection, do over-tax this country, and have persisted in over-taxing it here and more since the redist was delivered?—Oh, yes, since the Union, in fact.

31563. If that be the course of the Government in the question of taxation, and if the Government bought the lines, and administered them, through a Department of their own, do you think that the profits of the lines, if they once found their way

into the British Exchequer, would ever find their way back to Ireland, either in reductions of rates and fares, or in any form whatever?—Not at all in my opinion.

31564. On the other hand, if the lines were purchased by an Irish authority acting for Ireland, and responsible to Ireland, have you any doubt that any increase in profits thereby secured would be used for the benefit of the Irish public in the reduction of rates and fares?—Naturally they would.

Examined by Mr. A. Worswick.

31565. I observe, Mr. Maguire, that your evidence contemplates that the result of the reduction of rates would be a loss to start with?—Well, with regard to the railway companies, it might be, but then the uncertainty, I put it—

31566. Your point is that they cannot afford to reduce the rates, because, to begin with, it would reduce the dividends?—It probably would reduce the dividends, but when you look at it from this standard of the Trustee Act, it is a matter of uncertainty.

31567. You expect that it would reduce dividends, to start with?—Probably it would, for two or three years to come.

31568. Then it would produce the same effect if it was done by the State instead of by private companies—it would reduce the net income to start with?—That is a matter of opinion. It might for a time, but, with the encouragement given to industries it would produce a very increased revenue.

31569. After a time?—How could a private company make reductions.

31570. There is no reason why the reduction of rates, resulting in the reduction of net profits, should not apply to Government just as much as to a private company?—The two principles are not the same at all. The private company considers the interests of its shareholders.

31571. That is not the question. You agree that if the private company reduces its rates it would have a loss to start with?—I do not say it would—probably.

31572. *Chairman*.—It would probably.

31573. *Mr. Seaton*.—He says the uncertainty is enough to prevent it.

31574. *Mr. A. Worswick*.—I quite follow, but there would be just the same result whether the Government did it or the private company?—But the two stand in a different position.

31575. I agree. Please do not think I want to make you say anything you do not want to say. Then the Government would have to contemplate the possibility of being short?—For a time.

31576. I quite agree. That is all a matter of conjecture.

31577. If there were a shortage where would the money come from?—The over-taxation of the country.

31578. By extra taxation?—Yes, from the over-taxation.

31579. From the famous 22 millions?

31580. *Mr. Seaton*.—From the infamous 22 millions would be the better term.

31581. *Mr. A. Worswick*.—You, of course, contemplate, I know, that there would be great economies by putting the whole thing together?—Undoubtedly. That is my opinion. When you imagine forty boards and their officials that must amount to a great economy.

31582. Do you know there have been two instances in the last two or three years, on just about the same scale as the Irish railways? There were eight water companies in London and they were put together, under a board, and the purchase price came to about forty millions—about the cost of the Irish railways. Do you know that the new Board are spending more on administration than the whole eight companies did two years ago?—I suppose it is extravagant management. You can manage anything extravagantly.

31583. Do you know that the Swiss Government two or three years ago bought the railways there, and they are spending more on administration than all the separate companies?—I am not aware of it.

31584. It would not alter your view?—It is the first time I have heard of it.

31585. Does not it seem as if there might be some reason that it would not result in economy?—There might be special reasons in Switzerland. It is a very mountainous country.

No prospect of an increase in revenue or net profit on the Irish lines under present conditions.

The substitution of State ownership for the present system suggested in the interest of the shareholders and the Country generally.

The transfer of the control of the railways to a purely Irish authority advocated.

31583 That would not affect the expense of administration. The companies managed to do it cheaper when there were half a dozen of them than the Government, when there is only one. The country did not get any more mountainous!—There are, I suppose, difficulties in a country like that that do not occur in other countries.

31584 They are a thrifty race—the Swiss—and very good hands on money bargains, or are generally supposed to be. Let us take another point. You spoke of preferential rates and said they would not be allowed by the Government!—Yes.

31585 What is a preferential rate?—Placing the importer at an advantage over the producer.

31586 And if you favour the exporter, is that a preferential rate?—It is a preferential rate, but it is in favour of the country.

31587 Does a preferential rate mean a rate that somebody does not like?—I consider a preferential rate is a rate to the disadvantage of the country. If you favour the trade of another country at the expense of your own it is naturally an undue preference.

31588 We know what undue preference means in law, but I was rather puzzled the way you used "preferential rate"?—I took the general meaning of the term. In this country we understand rates that are granted to the foreigner to the detriment of the native producer to be preferential.

31589 To the detriment of the native producer. Then a very low rate to let Irish butter get into England is a preferential rate in Ireland?—I am only speaking—

31590 It is a preferential rate in Ireland?—How would it be a preferential rate in Ireland?

31591 You would not call it a preferential rate?—I am now speaking of Ireland.

31592 When that butter gets into England, and if the rate is paid in England, does it become preferential there?—If it is charged lower, I suppose, than the native producer can send it to London.

31593 I am afraid I have not got it quite correctly yet. Let us go to another point. You spoke of Belgium. I gather you consider that the private railways compared unfavourably with the public railways?—About Liège.

31594 I happen to have here—I was reading it just as you spoke—a comparison between the two, in an official French report. Do you know that in the year 1902 it was proposed that the State should buy up the Nord Belge, which is the principal private line about Liège?—No.

31595 Would you be surprised to know that when it was proposed there was very strong opposition to it in Parliament on the ground that the management of the companies was infinitely more bureaucratic than the management of the State railways?—I have not heard.

31596 It is a report to the French Senate on Belgian railways?—It was not the Belgian Parliament.

31597 The report quotes the debate in the Belgian Parliament, and one of the objections that were given was that the servants in the private railway were so much better off than the servants on the State railways?—I have not heard that.

31598 Just one other question about Belgium. Have you paid any attention to the financial results?—I have not considered them very much, because the opportunities are few here of getting information in the matter.

31599 I have here a quotation from the chairman of the Budget Committee in the Belgian Parliament, where he says—"We neither know where we are in the matter of paying off the debt, nor where we are going."

31600 Chairman.—That was answered, you know, by the Minister.

31601 Mr. Aswerth.—I am aware.

31602 Mr. Sexton.—Quotations of controversial speeches in a foreign Parliament, put to a witness in Ireland?

31603 Mr. Aswerth.—I only wish to ask Mr. Maguire whether his attention has been called to that question?—I have not heard.

31604 I do not ask anybody to take that as final, but, if one side is put, it is desirable that attention should be drawn to the other side.—It is difficult to get information.

31605a. Therefore, I quite agree, it is dangerous to take it from one side only. You spoke about the German export rate?—Yes.

31606 And the German gives low rates for the export of German products to foreign countries?—Yes.

31607 That is part of the German Protectionist character of German Customs legislation. It is all of a piece?—I suppose it is; but the Customs certainly favour the native product.

31608 Certainly; but exactly as the Customs favour the native producer by heavy duties on the foreigner's goods trade, if he comes in to compete?—I suppose they believe in protecting native industry.

31609 I gather you would approve of the same thing?—That is a question which does not arise before this Commission. Of course they should be favoured, as far as possible.

31610 The native producer should be favoured. That is your view?—Yes.

31611 It would not be natural for a country that, rightly or wrongly, works on a Free Trade basis, and refuses to favour native industry by its taxes, to do so by railway rates?—I do not see why that country should allow its railways to favour foreign importers at the expense of its own.

31612 I agree, Mr. Maguire, but we are not discussing favouring foreigners?—Is it not a question of favour?

31613 It is a question of favour, no doubt. The railways in this country are supposed to keep the balance even, and not to favour one or the other?—If they are they do not observe it.

31614 I won't ask you. They say that they do. That would be the natural thing in a country which does not favour the native over the foreigner by its tariff?—It would be in a country carrying on a Free Trade system. It would naturally consider that—

31615 It would do the same in railway rates as in Customs duties?—That is an entirely different matter.

31616 Chairman.—No, I do not think so.—It is different, because, with regard to protection duties, there would be, for the protection of native industry, but, with regard to railway rates it is an entirely different thing. Take a foreign producer who sends by water at a low rate of carriage. Then, of course, unless the native producer has some advantage, he won't be able to compete with the foreign producer at all—he will be driven out, because if he sent his goods any distance by railway he would be driven out. I think the Free Trade principle could not apply. If you put them on equality, by granting equal facilities that way—

31617 I want to get the broad, general question. Would it, in your view, be reasonable that the railways should be run on what I may call a Protectionist system while the Customs duties of the country are imposed on a Free Trade system?—The two are quite different.

31618 You do not see any incompatibility?—I do not see any incompatibility. The two things are different.

31619 Mr. Sexton.—I want to ask you whether the rates on foreign imports to Great Britain are not now more favourable than the rates for Irish exports to England, and whether the low import rates into Ireland are not more favourable than the inland rates in Ireland?—They are more favourable.

31620 Does not that operate as protection?—It does, but not to the producer in the country.

31621 And when we ask for equalisation of charges between the Irish exporter to Great Britain and the Continental importer also between the importer into Ireland and the Irish manufacturer—do not we ask for the removal of protection and the substitution of equality?—We do.

31622 Mr. Aswerth.—Accepting these facts, there is no difference between us.

31623 Mr. Sexton.—Just one question about the Belgian system. While the test of a private system might be profit—profit merely—must we not also consider, in such a case as that of Belgium, not simply what the profit is, but if the system has produced a great restriction of sales and hence, or great development of the prosperity of the community?—That is the first consideration.

Oct 18, 1907.

Mr. J. A. Maguire, witness, Dublin.

German export rates.

The adjustment of rates so that Irish trade may meet foreign competition on an equal footing advocated.

Suggestion that the railways should be run on a Protectionist system.

The low import rates into Ireland more favourable than the Irish inland rates.

The test of a State system of railways—first public utility, afterwards profit.

Oct. 16, 1900.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON PEE.

Mr. J. J.
Figuere,
St. John,
Dublin.

31518. With regard to the question of what you call preferential rates, I gather you would be in favour of having a higher rate on foreign goods—we will not go into what kind of goods—but, generally speaking, that foreign goods for the same quantities, and under similar conditions as home goods should be charged at a higher rate—I think they should be for the same distance. There might be certain exceptions where, if you impose the same rate, it might be a disadvantage to the native producer.

The question
of differential
treatment of
foreign goods
in the matter
of rates.

31519. You are aware of that question of differential treatment by the London and South-Western, and some years ago there was a celebrated case in Southampton, where this very case arose. An objection arose to low rates for imported goods sent to London, via Southampton, and the judge held that simply because the goods objected to were foreign goods, as he called them—imported goods—that that differential treatment did not constitute a preference. You are aware that is so?—I may have heard it.

31520. Chairman—I think, Colonel Pee, that was the South-Western, and I was in it. The whole contention was the large consignment.

31521. Colonel Hutchinson Pee.—And that justified preferential treatment?

31522. Chairman.—It was because it was a large consignment.

31523. Colonel Hutchinson Pee.—I quite admit that the conditions under which imported goods can come into Great Britain are against us. The conditions under which we are unfortunately obliged to send our goods handicap our producers, but the law, as it is at present, legalises that differential treatment—it should be altered.

The principle
upon which
privately-
owned rail-
ways give
reductions
in rates.

31524. And until the law is altered you really cannot complain. On what principle does a privately-owned railway company give reduction of rates?—The first consideration would be whether it will affect the dividends.

31525. I do not mean that. That is not the point. Assuming the rate for any commodity is 30s. a ton, and the railway company gives a rate of 5s.; why does it do so?—I suppose it expects a considerable increase of traffic, which might recoup it for the low rate.

31526. That is one reason, and I suppose the necessity of perhaps keeping traffic which, unless a lower rate were given, would go in some other direction is another.—Yes.

31527. We will assume that a railway company as at present owned, acts in the interests of its shareholders.—What other way would they act?

Private
railway com-
panies always
tend not
deliberately to
reduce rates
by way of
experiment.

31528. Then, if they think the low rate would give them extra traffic it will be to the interest of the railway company, because it will reduce the cost of handling and working expenses, and increase the dividends, and in such a case, do not you naturally think a railway company would give that reduction in their own interest?—Companies are naturally timid. It is an experiment to a certain extent, and it might not turn out to the satisfaction, and might reduce the dividend, and then there is the question of Trustee Stock.

31529. My question is, that by the reduction they would create a traffic and larger dividends. Is it your case that the railway companies do not sufficiently grasp the fact that by reduction of rates they would create traffic?—I think it is the position of the dividend of the principal companies with regard to the Trustee Act—the risk of going lower.

31530. What you mean to say is, that if they give a temporary reduction in the hope of attracting traffic it would involve temporary loss, and that also, when once given, it would render it impossible to bring the rate back again if the traffic did not pay?—The consideration that would weigh would be, I think, this:—“If we reduce the rates then it may probably increase the traffic and revenue, but it might not, and then the dividend standing at 5 per cent, if it is reduced one rate, it will mean that our debenture and preference stock ceases to be trustee securities.”

The question
as to the
treatment
of large as
distinguished
from small
lots of traffic
on a State-
owned system.

31531. You are aware that once the rate is reduced it would be difficult to raise it to the old level, and, I suppose, in that way you consider a private company would be afraid to make the experiment?—Yes, afraid to experiment.

31532. You are rather in favour of State and as against amalgamation. Do you think a State-owned system would be able to differentiate in regard to

rates to the same extent as a private system?—There is no comparison between the two at all, because the private companies always consider the shareholders.

31533. My point is this—do you think a State-owned railway would be able to give exceptional rates for exceptional traffic to the same extent as a privately-owned railway?—I have no doubt, and to a greater extent.

31534. You have stated that you studied this question as to foreign countries. Do you know that one of the great objections to State-ownership in regard to foreign countries is the rigidity and inflexibility in regard to those rates. They find that if they give a special rate to you, for a special quantity, they are obliged to give it to others—and it is the same in this country—but where the ownership is in the hands of the State, that such an Act would lay them open to a charge of preference and unfair treatment, and, as a matter of fact, in Prussia and other countries, the exceptional rates that are given in this country and in England, do not prevail to the same extent. Would that be a valid reason—that exceptional rates is one of the chief objections? We had the evidence given by Sir Joseph Ward, and he said that in New Zealand, I think, the rate was the same for one thousand tons as for one ton. Do you think that would be in the interests of the country—it might be in the interests of the small distributor or the small producer, but would it be in the interests of the whole community, that where a man was able to build up a big business, that he should be, I do not say penalised, but deprived from still further extending that business by a fixed rate which would not allow of his getting any differential treatment when he sent away enormous consignments? Do you think that would be in the interests of the whole country?—It is a strange case.

31535. That is what occurred in New Zealand—that rapid system for one ton or a thousand tons. I gather you consider that if the railways in this country were in the hands of the State the primary function would be to help industries in every direction?—I should say so.

31536. The receipts would go into a common fund—the idea would not be to make anything beyond a moderate interest on the cost of construction, and everything beyond that would go towards reducing the rates and fares?—I should think so.

31537. You spoke of the Belgian system. Apart from the Belgian main lines, which, of course, are principally in the hands of the State, you are aware that there is a very large system of secondary railways in Belgium in the hands of the National Society of Railways?—In certain districts.

31538. There is something like 2,000 miles at work, and half the capital is provided by the State and half by the companies, and something like 1,200 miles more are under consideration. Do you know that the receipts of that system, apart from the traffic on the main lines, are something like 25,000,000 a year?—I was not aware.

31539. And that the State, in addition to finding half the capital of that great system, gives it special privileges in the way of exemption from taxation on their lines and selling stock, and so on?—I am not aware of that.

31540. You admit that that must be very much to the advantage of the Belgian community?—I suppose it is.

31541. Would you go so far as to say it—as I have said the system as being extended in every direction, something like 1,200 miles being under consideration—if in the case of a country rich in population, rich in resources, both manufacturing and agricultural, such as Belgium—if the policy of the State is to still further develop that country, if it is possible to further develop it, and to give special facilities and exemptions, such as I have spoken of—do you think it would be a fair argument to say that in the case of a poor country such as this—poor in population, lamentably deficient in any industry, and dependent solely on agriculture—such a policy would be still more justified?—A policy that would encourage the industries of the country.

31542. If such a policy has been, and is being pursued in Belgium, which is infinitely richer than we are, would not it be more justifiable in this country?—You would have to consider the merits of the system, but I consider the only solution is State purchase.

31646. *Mr. Sexton*.—State purchase, defined as you have defined it?—Yes.

Examined by LORD PIERCE.

31641. Just one question about State purchase. You seem to be clearly in favour of State purchase, because you think the great reductions that are given by the State railways to products exported would be an advantage in this country. I refer to this because I think you did not quite grasp Colonel Peck's statement as to German State railways giving large reductions to encourage an export traffic, but they give it to every person alike, and that, you consider, would be such an advantage to the Irish producer that you would like to see the Irish railways owned by the State for that purpose?—Certainly.

31642. You agree with me that it is largely owing to this great reduction of export rates by the State railways in Germany that the industries in that country are growing up so quickly?—That is my opinion and the opinion of every German I ever came across.

31643. In answer to Mr. Sexton, you stated that the railway companies in Ireland very frequently spend large sums of money, charging it to capital account, to put their line and their works into proper condition, and that you thought that that was going on year after year, to the improvement of the railway company, but are not you aware that the Board of Trade have actually a form regulating the manner in which all accounts shall be kept, and that the auditor is responsible to see that that is done?—It has never imposed the least check in the way of capital expenditure.

31644. Do you think that the auditor, for the sake of getting the income-tax for the Treasury, say, passed accounts which are improper?—It is a mere formality.

31645. *Mr. Sexton*.—I am passing no question that the expenditure is unnecessary or is not according to law. It may be quite necessary, and entirely according to law. My only point is this—that whenever expenditure, whatever its character, does not return an income, then, if new capital is raised for it, the interest on that additional capital diminishes the income left for ordinary shareholders.

31646. *Lord Pierce*.—I only asked the question because of the answer given by Mr. Maguire. I do not think you meant, in answer to Mr. Sexton, that there was improper expenditure, but you do not suppose that if the railway company considers an extension or alteration of stations necessary, which cannot possibly bring in any direct revenue, it should not be done?

31646. *Mr. Sexton*.—Not at all?—It should be charged to revenue.

31647. *Mr. Sexton*.—If you borrow new capital, the interest in the new capital diminishes the amount available for the ordinary dividend, unless there is an increase of revenue?—It should be a charge on revenue.

31647. *Lord Pierce*.—Not at all.

31648. *Chairman*.—I do not see why. I will put it down in two words. You know the difference between capital and revenue accounts?—Yes.

31649. Anything additional to a line—to what it has got—should go to capital?—If it would be a permanent addition.

31650. I am not speaking of a permanent addition. You spoke of an extension of the line?—I say an extension would be a different thing—the question of a new line.

31651. *Lord Pierce*.—Then you agree that any sum that it is necessary to expend upon a station or extend a line should not be from capital?—It is a different thing extending a station and extending a line.

31652. You do not charge against the railway companies that they are doing repairs out of capital?—I am afraid a lot of them are.

31653. *Chairman*.—Now, Mr. Maguire, you do not for a moment suggest that anything improper has been done with reference to the accounts of shareholders?—I am not speaking of anything improper, but the question was not here. I think some of them that should have been charged to revenue have been charged to capital.

31654. You say that the railway companies have charged to capital what they should have charged to revenue?—That is so, in some cases. Of course I am getting it, there are some exceptions.

31654. You know, Mr. Maguire, you are a solicitor, and you should not make these charges unless you can prove them.

31655. *Lord Pierce*.—That is what I was coming to.

Mr. Sexton.—I hope Lord Pierce will allow me to make my position clear. I did not, by any question of mine, challenge the propriety of expenditure. I simply said that in the case of certain expenditure, if it is charged in a certain way, the effect is to diminish the interest of the ordinary shareholders.

31656. *Chairman*.—Increase the capital and reduce the amount of the revenue.

31657. *Lord Pierce*.—In your statement the charge was against the auditor of the railway companies. I presume a public auditor, responsible to the shareholders and to the public who are buying the shares. In other words, you accuse the auditor of having passed a thing that is not correct?—What I said was that it is not preventing the increase of capital of the Irish railway companies.

31657. I only ask one other question. Have you any instance showing that any one of the companies in Ireland have done what you stated in your evidence?

31657. *Chairman*.—Where they have charged to capital what they should have charged to revenue?

31658. *Lord Pierce*.—That is what I mean. It would strengthen your evidence?—I cannot call to mind at the present moment. There may have been some instances, and of course there are.

31659. You have no evidence in proof of it?—I have not the facts before me at present.

31660. If you find any facts before this Commission ceases, I think we are entitled to have them?—That is a matter with regard to particular railway companies that is scarcely necessary—because the shareholders discuss their matters together, and it is scarcely fair to single out any particular company.

31661. *Mr. Asquith*.—Might I just say one word on that? I think the real difficulty has arisen from the double use of the word "improperly." If you charge to capital the repairs of the road—ordinary everyday repairs—that is improper in the sense of being a thing an auditor ought to pass, but, if you charge to capital, we will say an addition to a station; it is entirely an addition to the prospect of the company, and it is not a question for the auditor. You have a perfect right to do it, but you may say it is improper as a matter of finance, because it does not bring in new revenue. These two senses are mixed up together, and I understand the effect of what Mr. Maguire says is to be that they have charged to capital things that do not increase the earnings and therefore diminish the value of ordinary stock, but there is no necessary charge of misconduct?—I do not make any charge of misconduct. That is a different thing.

31662. *Chairman*.—That is quite sufficient, if there is no charge of misconduct?—What Mr. Sexton alleged—

31663. *Mr. Sexton* was perfectly right.

31663. *Mr. Sexton*.—My question was, if expenditure for works which do not return a corresponding revenue is charged to capital, and paid for by borrowed money, the interest on that capital must come out of the fund which would be otherwise available for ordinary dividends?—That is manifest.

Oct. 19, 1907.

Mr. J. J. Maguire, Solicitor, Dublin.

The policy of charging to capital expenditure on railway non-productive works condemned.

Bad policy on the part of the Irish railway companies to load the unsatisfactory condition of their capital.

Mr. MARCUS LYNCH, J.R., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

31664. You are a Justice of the Peace and Chairman of the Galway Harbour Commissioners?—Yes, sir.

31665. Have you been connected with the Harbour Commissioners for some time?—Oh, I have been a

Commissioner for forty odd years—not perpetually, but I have been chairman for, I think, the last five or six years.

31666. Is it an incorporated body?—Yes, I believe so.

Mr. Marcus Lynch, J.R., Chairman, Galway Harbour Commissioners.

Oct. 18, 1907.
Mr. Marcus
Lynch, J.P.,
Chairman,
Galway
Harbour Com-
missioners.

The repre-
sentatives
chapter of
the Galway
Harbour
Board.

Suggested
amalgama-
tion of the
Irish rail-
ways into
three or four
main systems.

State purchase
disapproved
Commission
officials not
acceptable as
a rule.

The Midland
Great
Western
Company's
agents, &c.
at Galway
distributive
satisfactory.

State aid
necessary to
maintain the
Midland
Great
Western
Railway
Company to
lower rates
without
reducing their
dividend.

The capacity
of Galway
Docks.

State purchase
objected to,
but State aid
approved.

31607. And fairly representative of the district—the members?—Fairly representative of the town, because most of the Harbour Commissioners are merchants. All the principal merchants of the town are on the Harbour Board.

31608. They represent the trade and industry of the place?—They do represent the whole industry of the place.

31609. Have they considered, either collectively, or with you individually, the question of the Irish railways?—They have and debated me to attend before you and give their views.

31610. Well, now, you are in favour of the amalgamation of all the Irish railways?—No, sir.

31611. You are not in favour of it?—No.

31612. Well, now, tell your views—the views of your body?—The views of the Galway Harbour Commissioners are these—that the smaller lines should be merged into three or four principal lines, because we consider that the principal lines could manage three inferior lines, as I might call them—smaller lines—better than they are managed at present. I believe there are a great many complaints, without going actually into the statement. For instance, the one that most affects our town is the West Clare. Complaints have been made about that.

31613. One minute. I may take it that the Commissioners do not approve of the suggestion of State Purchase?—No, sir.

31614. But they do favour an amalgamation of railways with two or three systems?—Yes.

31615. And that these systems would represent the whole of the railways of Ireland?—Exactly. They would not like State purchase for this reason—that they consider that the less you have to do with the Government officials the pleasanter for ourselves, and we consider them—not perhaps as courteous as they might be often to the public. I except certainly, the Board of Works, who have been very kind to us—it is only right to say that. I speak as I find them. I and my colleagues and Government officials, as a rule, are not as courteous and pleasant to deal with as they might be. They are paid servants of the Government, and if you want a concession you are more likely to get it from a private company than if you have to apply to Government officials, who will probably shirk their shoulders and say they will take a note of the matter. That is the reason we are against State purchase. Another thing, too—the Galway people are very much pleased with the Midland Railway Company.

31616. What railway serves Galway?—The Midland Great Western Railway.

31617. And no other?—That is the only one.

31618. And, as far as that railway is concerned, they are satisfied with the facilities and rates and fares in operation?—I do not say the rates and fares, but they are quite satisfied they will get the greatest courtesy from the directors of the railway company, as far as they can without lessening their dividends. They have been as pleasant towards the Galway people as they possibly could be.

31619. You have really no personal grievance against the Midland, which is the only railway serving the port?—On the contrary, we feel very grateful to it, but, at the same time, we would like to have the rates very much lower. We consider a great many of the rates—the merchants do—are very high, more particularly as they have to get a great deal of goods now by railway on account of the state of the harbour. The harbour was a very nice one and a very good one some thirty or forty years ago, when the tonnage was much smaller. Now, unfortunately we can only deal with transhipment. We cannot bring into our docks a vessel of 4,000 or 5,000 tons, and we have to use smaller steamers, and get them from other places, and of course that is more expensive; and we have to get a good deal of goods by the railways, and we would certainly like to see the rates very much reduced, and we consider it would not be fair and honest, when a company that is only paying 3 per cent.—and you understand that they cannot go lower, by the Section—should be asked to do anything which would lessen their dividend below 3 per cent. But what we would suggest, and ask the Government to do, is, holding this Commission, is to have the rates lowered, and if the company should have thereby to recoup them for the loss. A great many think they would not; but if they do lose, that the Government would refund the money.

31620. I gather from what you say that your Commissioners are opposed to State purchase, but you are not opposed to State aid?—Precisely.

31621. That is to say, you will get as much money as you like from the State, and you think the reduction of the rates would benefit the country?—I think so.

31622. And develop industries that do not exist now?—There are no few industries that do exist in Ireland, unfortunately, I would not like to make a suggestion.

31623. It might develop them?—It might develop them. It would give an opening to them at least.

31624. You said something about the West Clare Railway. We have heard a good deal about that railway?—I only mentioned that as a small railway I think would be well merged into a larger one.

31625. You suggest that part should go to the Midland and part to the Great Southern?—I do not make any suggestion of that kind. I am not sufficiently an expert to say how much should go to the Southern, or whether the whole ought not to go to the Great Southern, because there is no connection, I think, between that railway and the Midland. That connects with the Great Southern, and the Great Southern connects with the Midland at Ashbury.

31626. You suggest that the West Clare and portion of the Great Southern should be handed over to the Midland?—No, sir. I suggested that the West Clare should be handed over to the Great Southern, not to the Midland.

31627. To the Great Southern?—Yes.

31628. You say it should be merged with the Midland?—That is a mistake. I never said that.

31629. Should be merged with the Great Southern?—Into the Great Southern. There is no connection with the Midland.

31630. That is so. You would merge it. How do you propose that should be done? That it should be sold to them?—Oh, that is to be made out. Let it be done as the Sub-Commissioners do with the rest.

31631. Do you mean there should be an Act of Parliament passed to compel the West Clare to sell to the Great Southern?—Yes.

31632. Whether they liked it or not?—Whether they liked it or not.

31633. And the Great Southern should take the line and work it?—Yes.

31634. And if it was worked at a loss should the Great Southern bear the loss?—I do not think it would be fair. The Government should step in.

31635. State aid again?—I am entirely in favour of State aid, and I do not think you can do much, unfortunately, without it.

31636. Can you tell us, from anything you have got there, what is the tonnage of the port of Galway?—The shipping tonnage?

31637. Yes, for the last ten years, I want to see the importance of the place. The tonnage of the port for the last three years is as follows—1903, 49,206 tons; 1904, 52,711 tons; 1905, 45,622 tons. It decreased greatly.

31638. Is that the net registered tonnage of shipping?—Yes.

31639. Not the gross?—I cannot say. "The tonnage of the port for the last three years is as follows."

31640. Is it the net registered tonnage, or the gross?—I am not an expert. I cannot say.

31641. It is the gross, I think?—I suppose it is.

31642. One question. You are in favour of reducing rates and fares, but not at the expense of the railway company?—Yes, and I will give you the reason.

31643. You have given a very fair reason, that you do not want to punish the railway companies?—We do not want to punish them, and when the dividend is so small we do not think that it would be honest or fair to do it. If there was a dividend of 6 per cent. then it would be different.

31644. I quite agree with that; but those are your views?—Those are my views.

31645. And, further, that you object to State purchase, but you do not object to State aid?—No.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

31646. To clear up an answer to the Chairman which I think you made, and in order to get it properly on the notes, I think you meant to convey that

you would give the West Clare Railway and the Great Southern and Western Railway branch from Ennis to Sligo to the Midland Great Western?—No, sir; I never said anything of the kind.

31707. You did not?—No, sir.

31708. That is what I thought you meant?—No, sir.

31709. Then, you meant the Ennis and Sligo portion of the Great Southern and Western to be in their own hands and hand them over to the West Clare?—Exactly.

31710. That is the opposite to what you have given in your statement?—I do not think it is anything of the kind.

31711. Now, you have also told the Chairman that the tonnage going in and out of Galway is going down considerably?—Yes.

31712. Have you not yourselves largely to blame for that, far not keeping up with the times? The harbour, you have told us in your evidence, was a splendid harbour thirty or forty years ago?—Yes.

31713. When ships only drew twelve or eighteen feet?—Yes.

31714. But the steamers have increased in size, and Galway has remained stationary?—Galway has remained stationary.

31715. Now, if you had gone on with the times, and deepened the harbour, the same as Dublin, we will say, and Belfast, would not you have assisted very materially yourselves and the Midland Great Western Company?—Exceedingly.

31716. And it is the fault of the Galway people themselves?—No, sir, it is not the fault of them, but there is an old saying—

31717. The fault of the Government in not giving you money?—I do not want to choose the blame on anyone, but there is an old saying that Samson was a strong man and Solomon was a wise man, but neither of them could pay money if they had not got it, and God knows we have tried often enough. The Board of Works, as I said before, have been very kind to us, and lent us money to pay off debts, and leave their dividend, the annual amount due to them, to be held over from time to time; but now to make a harbour, which we are trying to do, we go in for a grant. There would be no use in asking for a loan, because we could not pay them back, and we are honest.

31718. But now, Mr. Lynch, you will admit that you have told me that Galway has the finest position in Ireland as regards distance between America and Great Britain?—I never said anything of the kind.

31719. Surely you admit that from your knowledge as Chairman of the Harbour Board?—Well, the County Galway.

31720. I thought you were Chairman of the Harbour Board?—I am Chairman of the Harbour Board.

31721. But take the case of Galway?—The best coast, for instance, Killary Bay is nearer.

31722. That is a great harbour?—A great harbour?—A natural harbour.

31723. Better than Galway?—I have travelled a good deal, and I think it is about the best natural harbour in the world.

31724. Chairman.—Deep water?—Deep water for the biggest ship that ever has or will be built. It is only about a couple of miles across, and they have about twenty-five fathoms of water.

31725. Lord Pirbright.—And what railway runs into that?—The Midland runs close to it?—The Midland runs within about fourteen miles?—To Ennis.

31726. Have they any docks or quays?—No, it has never been utilized, except that the British fleet comes in there. The heaviest ships of the British fleet come in there. It is a perfect harbour, and I think it is the finest harbour in the world; and I have seen a number.

Examined by Colonel HURMESON P.C.

31727. I see on page 2 of your proof you state that it would be necessary to have a tramway or light railway constructed between Clifden and Cleggan?—Clifden to Cleggan?

31728. I see on page 2, "I think it very necessary to construct a railway or tramway between Clifden and Cleggan, which would materially develop the very extensive mackerel and herring fishing in the district?"—No doubt it would be.

31729. Where is Cleggan?—Cleggan is near Bofin; beyond Clifden.

31730. What distance is it?—I think it is about seven or eight miles.

31731. Of course, the herring and mackerel fishing is an important industry?—The mackerel fishing.

31732. On your particular coast?—Yes.

31733. And the value in 1865 to the fishermen was something like a quarter of a million—the value of the herring and mackerel fishing?—I think so. The Midland Company have been very kind in sending them to the market. The moment there is a take of them they send off special trains—I think as many as seven or eight sometimes—the moment they arrive in Galway. By steamer, of course, they have to arrive now; and they send express trains off at once to take them to the English market.

31734. You say with regard to the fisheries off Cleggan, which is seven or eight miles beyond Clifden, that there is a difficulty in getting their fish to market?—Yes; they can only get them in by steamer.

31735. By cart?—I do not think there are carts in that locality; but by steamer to Galway.

31736. Has it ever been brought before the railway company or before the Department?—I am not aware. I think there is only one railway they have, and that is the Midland.

31737. You say, "Mining operations might also be started in the neighbourhood of Cleggan on a more extensive scale, and the Government, County Council, and railway company should give a subsidy for this very valuable object?"—I never said that in my evidence. It is put to me unaware.

31738. It is on the proof that I have got?—But there is one thing I would like to remark, which would be a matter to bring before the Board of Trade, that it would be a great help and great convenience to the people of Galway if they would allow the Midland to run composite trains from Galway to Athlone. What I mean is this, by composite trains, to put on a passenger carriage.

31739. Chairman.—A mixed train?—A mixed train, from Galway to Athlone. There is one splendid service, the limited mail, that leaves Galway at 3.40, and three-quarters of an hour after that another train leaves, at 4.25, and no train leaves between that and midnight; and it would be a great thing if people in Athlone and Ballinasloe, who come to Galway for the day, could go by the 7 o'clock train, by which a carriage is put on at the time of the Assizes, and when the waltzes are out, and they find it a great convenience, and I think your Commission might suggest it.

31740. I think your permission and your close relations with the Midland Company would do a great deal more than anything the Commission could?—But the Midland wish it. It is the Board of Trade who object.

31741. Colonel Hutchinson P.C.—Although this particular passage about the development of this mining industry is not in your proof, still as you have touched on a point which has not been brought before this Commission, I hope you will allow me to ask you one question?—Certainly.

31742. Are you a member of the County Council?—No.

31743. You admit that it would be very desirable that the County Council should have powers to contribute to any local work, piers or harbours, or any railway, if it was desirable?—Yes, I think it would, sir.

31744. Are you aware that under the Act establishing the Department, County Councils are prohibited from contributing to any work which they may desire to develop, the cost of which exceeds the miscellaneous sum of £450?—No, sir.

31745. Well, that has been very strongly called attention to by the Departmental Committee, which has just been inquiring, and it has been stated by them, that in their opinion, the restriction is a great obstacle to the development of districts. Of course, £450 cannot do much, and in cases on the west coast, where the Board of Works are very often anxious to contribute, provided they can get some local assistance, the County Councils, under the present law, are absolutely prohibited from giving any contribution where the total cost involved exceeds £450?—I quite agree with you that it would be very desirable that

Oct. 7th, 1907.

Mr. Marcus Lynch, J.P., Chairman Galway Harbour Commission.

The value of the mackerel and herring fisheries of Galway.

Absence of railway commission in Cleggan outside the development of the fisheries.

"Mixed" trains between Galway and Athlone suggested.

To obviate present inconvenience to passengers from Galway after 4.25.

The insufficiency of the existing powers of County Councils to contribute to works of development.

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. Marcus Lynch, A.R.,
Chairman,
Galway Harbour Com-
missioners.

Attendance of the Local
Government
Act in this
respect
suggested.

The Midland
Great
Western R.L.
way Company
and to have
done all in
their power
to add to the
development
of Galway.

that should be changed. I am not certain about the figures, but that they should be allowed to go halves with the Board of Works or with the Government.

31745. Would you like to see that particular clause in the Act amended so that County Councils should have power to assist in any undertaking such as I mention, which would be for the interest of the district?—Certainly; but I would not give them the power to expend large sums themselves.

31746. May I take it from your evidence that so far as your opinion goes, and your knowledge of the whole of the west coast of Galway, that the enterprise shown by the Midland Great Western has met all the requirements of your particular district?—Yes, sir, I think it has. I have not heard any complaints. Of course now and again they complain of insufficiency of wagons, or that, but as to the general way the thing is conducted, I have never heard any complaints, and no complaints have been brought before me, and they have had always the greatest civility and kindness.

31747. And, so far as they have the power, they do everything to develop the industries of that particular district?—Oh, yes; they do their best, and I am glad to say, that that year they have given a great many excursion trains, and I am very glad to say that I see in the papers that then receipts for the nine months have been £17,000 in excess of what they were in corresponding period of last year.

31748. That is in connection with the Exhibition, I suppose?—I do not know whether it is or not, but I did suggest to one of the inspectors I saw that instead of giving excursions for only one day, for it is very hard when a man has to go up in the morning and back in the evening, they should always give these excursions for three days, so as to give a person time to rest, and, I am glad to say, that they have done so.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

Popularity of
the Company
in Galway.

31749. I gather that the Midland Great Western is distinctly in favour at Galway at present?—Well, I think it is. The feeling of the Galway people is always very nice towards people who are nice to them.

31750. Somewhat I mean to remember that they were not always so friendly, were they?—Indeed they were not. Adversity often changes us.

31751. Is it that you have got more charitable so that they have got better?—They have got better.

31752. Does Galway make special use of the Great Southern and Western from Limerick up to Rhgo?—Galway?

31753. The traffic of Galway?—No; I cannot answer that; but I do not think it does. I do not think there is much in Galway. I do not see what traffic they can have with Rhgo.

Examined by Mr. SACROD.

Unsat-
isfactory
existing train
service from
Galway.

31754. The Midland Company is a nice civil company, Mr. Lynch?—I have always found them so.

31755. And when you say they are in favour in Galway you mean that you receive civility from them, but then you think the trains are too few and the rates too high?—Yes, sir. I did not say that the trains were too few. What I said was this, that I thought the trains were badly arranged so far as the town of Galway is concerned, because you have one train to Dublin at 3.40, and you have another at 4.25.

31756. You say "It would be a great advantage if more trains were run?—No, sir, I did not say that.

31757. I have read it out of your proof?—I don't acknowledge that at all.

31758. What has happened to your abstract since it left your hands?—That does not represent my view.

31759. I have here what purports to be an "Abstract of evidence to be given by Mr. Marcus Lynch," and in it you say "it would be a great advantage if more trains were run?—Oh, yes; but I think there is another paragraph after that explaining it, that we could not ask the Midland to run more, considering the state they are in.

31760. I am not putting that point at all, but I am saying that the Midland is in favour with you because of its civility, but that you think there should be more trains and that the rates should be lower?—Yes.

31761. There I leave it?—I cannot leave it there, because I have a right to explain that what I mean is that it would not be just to ask for more trains, but we would like to have the trains running at 4.25 altered.

31762. Chairman?—You have explained that, that it should leave at a later hour.

31763. Mr. SACROD.—That does not alter the fact that the trains are too few and the rates too high?—It does.

31764. Did you not say just now that the trains were too few and the rates too high?—No; you must take into consideration the finances.

31765. Are the trains too few or are they not?—Not considering the finances.

31766. Are they too few for the convenience of the people?—That is not the question. Of course we would like to have the trains like on the Kingstown railway every twenty minutes or half-hour if we could.

31767. But that is not a reasonable way of looking at the question?—I think it is. Considering the finances of the company, I think we have sufficient trains.

31768. Will you kindly leave the finances aside for a moment, and kindly answer my question courteously—which I put to you courteously—are the trains sufficiently numerous for the convenience of Galway?—I think they are.

31769. Are the rates low enough?—Well, the rates are not excessive. We would like them lower, but I don't think we can complain. You know many people talk about Italian railways and State railways. I have travelled a good deal in Italy, and I believe that the rates—

31770. Kindly keep to the question. You say in your proof that it would be a great advantage if the rates and fares were reduced?—Yes.

31771. Very well. Now, do you say that the cheap rates given by the Midland Railway in the case of certain industries have had a satisfactory result?—I do, I say so. They have given very cheap rates for instance now for agricultural produce. They bring twenty pounds, which is a God-send to people if they were stopping in Dublin for some time—twenty pounds delivered at your house in Dublin for 4d.; thirty pounds for 6d.

31772. The point I am on is this. They gave cheap rates in the case of some marble and granite works?—I know that. I won't say cheap rates. Five shillings a ton.

31773. Cheaper rates—special rates?—Yes.

31774. Have these special rates had a good effect in stimulating those industries?—Certainly.

31775. They have had. Then you do not think it is too late to stimulate the industries of Ireland by cheap rates?—Certainly not.

31776. Because we have had an Irish manufacturer here who, having secured a low rate for himself and having greatly prospered thereby, was of opinion that a low rate would be of no use to anybody else. Do you accept that view?—No, sir; certainly not.

31777. It is something like the case of a man who, having managed to climb out of the water and get comfortably on a raft, calls out to other people in the water that there is no use in swimming and they had better drown, as there is no chance of saving them?—Precisely.

31778. You say that the companies cannot afford to give lower rates?—I say that companies which pay by the skin of their teeth three per cent. cannot afford it without some guarantee. I believe myself that, looking to the results of the excursions which they give at very low fares, if they lowered the fares in a good many instances they would not lose, and that they would gain ultimately. But I do not think it would be fair to ask for it if it would have any chance of lowering their dividend beyond three per cent.

31779. But does the inability of the company to give the reductions after the fact that the reductions are greatly required?—No, it does not.

31780. Do you think many branches are required throughout the country to develop the transport system?—Of course they would be always useful, if you disregard the expense and the money; if they could be made for a twentieth part of what they cost.

31781. The companies at any rate cannot afford to make them?—No, certainly not.

More train
and lower
rates
required.

31781. Well, now amalgamation of itself would not produce either the construction of branches or a reduction of rates?—On all the lines.

31782. If you unite all the systems?—No.

31783. It would not of itself produce such effects?—No.

31784. Your reason for being against State purchase is that you do not want to have Imperial Government officials managing the Irish railways?—Presently, and from experience of other countries I do not think it is a success.

31785. And looking to the way in which the Government treated us in the matter of over-lavation, perhaps you think that if they bought the line and owned the line once they got hold of the profits we would get very little out of them?—I have no doubt whatever that that would be the case.

31786. But if the reduction of fares and rates required by the country could be secured by the acquisition of the lines by the people of Galway and the rest of the people of Ireland, acting through an au-

thority responsible to the people, do you think that a solution?—Purchase by whom?

31787. By the people of Galway and the rest of the people of Ireland?—Yes.

31788. And controlled by a representative body responsible to the people, to secure them the reductions they required. Do you think that solution would be satisfactory to the Galway Harbour Commissioners?—I think that is a question that should receive some consideration; I can answer it as far as this. If it reduced rates and gave you an improvement in the traffic, certainly it would; certainly it is a long question to answer off-hand, whether it would be advantageous or not.

31789. I assume that you think that in such an event the Harbour Commissioners would be in harmony with the people of Galway and the people of Ireland?—Certainly. The Galway Harbour Commissioners are in favour of anything that would improve the country, and improve the town, and improve the harbour.

31790. I quite expected you to say so

Mr. C. WALSH examined by the CHAIRMAN.

31790. I think you are the Secretary of the Ballyhay Dairy Company?—Yes.

31791. Ballyhay being in the County Cork?—Yes.

31792. What district?—The Charleville district, near the line of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

31793. And your company, I suppose, export various articles?—Yes; we started the industry in the year 1890, and I find, by reference to papers here, that in the year 1898, our output of butter amounted to 71 tons, and in the year 1906 it was nearly double that, 142 tons.

31794. And do you not send out anything else besides butter?—Nothing else besides butter.

31795. And are you satisfied with the rates and facilities offered you by the Great Southern and Western?—No; we are not satisfied at all with the facilities. We are greatly handicapped for want of facilities at the level crossing known as Ballyoskerry, which you will see on this map (*Witness indicates portions on map*).

31796. The map in front of me now shows the position of the Ballyhay Dairy?—Yes, within half a mile of the level crossing where the proposed station was to be.

31797. Then, the dairy at present is four and a half miles from a railway station?—Yes.

31798. And how far would it be if this particular level crossing was converted into a station?—Half a mile.

31799. Now, what is the distance between the nearest two stations?—By the railway?

31800. Mr. Sneyton—From Charleville to Ballyoskerry—Nine miles. I think that is one of the longest distances, if not the longest distance, between any two stations from Dublin to Cork.

31801. This would come in midway?—Something nearer to Charleville.

31802. About midway?—About midway.

31803. The distance between Charleville and Ballyoskerry is nine miles?—Yes.

31804. The proposed station at Ballyoskerry would come in halfway?—Midway.

31805. Half a mile from your dairy, which is now four and a half miles from Charleville?—Yes.

31806. Chairman—Now, of course, you have represented this to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company?—Yes, sir.

31807. And what is their answer?—We sent a petition to the Great Southern and Western Company in the year 1900, and it was very largely and substantially ignored. We sent two petitions to them, and a considerable time after the petitions were sent I had this communication from them:—"Great Southern and Western Railway Company, Traffic Manager's Office, Dublin, August 2nd, 1900. Dear Sir, I am in receipt of your favour of the 31st ult., in connection with proposed station at Ballyhay, and beg to inform you that the subject is receiving my attention."

31808. What was the actual result?—It is stated in this letter, dated Great Southern and Western Railway, Secretary's Office, Kaughran Terrace, Dublin, 21st September, 1900. "Dear Sir, I beg to

acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 25th instant and to inform you that my Board have sanctioned the erection of a block station at Ballyoskerry, and that no time will be lost in carrying out the work."

31809. Mr. Deeworth—A block station?—A block station. I did not know what they meant by that.

31810. Chairman—But I do. Now, what did you do upon receiving that letter. Did you write to ask them what a block station meant?—Yes. I got another letter, dated "Traffic Manager's Office, 25th September, 1900—Dear Sir, with reference to your letter of the 25th instant, addressed to the Secretary, I beg to inform you that the company will probably be prepared to accept consignments of butter at Ballyoskerry Station, when erected, but regret that they will be unable to convey coal to this district, owing to the unsuitability of the station for such traffic."

31811. That is, coal?—Coal.

31812. But, as to butter?—That they would receive butter at the station, but that, owing to the unsuitability of the station, they would not bring coal.

31813. Now, has anything been done since that time?—Nothing has been done since that time. After that the thing was allowed to lapse. I had a letter from the District Superintendent in Cork, Mr. Bulkeley, dated 22nd August, 1901, in which he said:—

"Dear Sir, referring to your letter of the 31st ult., to Mr. O'Sullivan, re the opening of a station at Ballyhay, and my letter of 16th instant, to you, I beg to say that I shall have the pleasure of calling on you between 11 and 12 o'clock to-morrow, 22nd instant." He called and inquired as to the probable traffic in the place, and he wrote me another letter, dated 7th September, 1901, saying:—"Dear Sir, replying to your of 6th instant re station at Ballyhay I beg to say that I intended to convey the fact that under present circumstances no date could possibly be fixed for opening a station at the level crossing." Then, I had another letter from him, dated 20th September, 1901:—"Dear Sir, referring to previous correspondence on the subject of a station at Ballyhay, if you will let me know when you are likely to be at Cork I will meet you and let you know how the matter stands." I subsequently met Mr. Bulkeley by arrangement, at his office in Cork, and the gist of his communication to me was that owing to the great expense incurred by the Great Southern and Western Company in the amalgamation at that time they could not go on with the station for the present. Feeling provision to get them to move further in the matter, I communicated with the Department of Agriculture, to see what they could do; and I will read the correspondence.

31814. Read the last letter you have got. We will assume your letter to them. Read the answer?—It is from the Department of Agriculture, dated 3rd January, 1902:—"Sir, with reference to your letter of the 4th ult., in which you complain of the failure of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to provide adequate facilities for passenger and butter traffic at Ballyoskerry, situated between Charleville and Ballyoskerry, I have to inform you that the Department, agreeably to your request, brought

Oct. 12, 1907.

Mr. Marcus Lynch, 27, Chairman, Galway Harbour Commissioners.

State ownership and popular control of the railways approved if it comes to confer benefit to the country.

Mr. C. Walsh, Secretary of the Ballyhay Dairy Company.

The negative Union with the Great Southern and Western Company is to the contrary of a station at Ballyoskerry.

The company agree to erect a block station, September, 1900.

Butter traffic, but not coal, to be dealt with there.

Company subsequently with new franchise, and station not provided.

The assistance of the Department of Agriculture sought and given, but without success.

Dec. 16, 1897.

Mr C. Walsh,
Secretary of the Ballybay
Dairy
Company.

The company's
explanation
that their
plans to
erect a station
at Bally-
carrery was
given owing
to a mis-
under-
standing.

the entire question under the notice of the Board of Directors of the company, from whom a communication has now been received, from which it appears that it was not the intention of the company to erect a block station at Ballycarrery."

31815. That it was not the intention?—Not the intention. The letter goes on—"The company further state:—What the company really decided upon, and which has been carried out, was the erection of a block cabin to divide the section between Ballycarrery and Charleville, but owing to a misunderstanding, Mr. Walsh was incorrectly advised; but the circumstances leading to the error have been explained to him by the company's District Superintendent." That is the most pacific excuse that was ever given by a company to evade their distinct and written promise.

31816. What intrest was it to you to have a block cabin?—It did not concern us in the slightest.

31817. You did not care about their block cabin?—As a matter of fact, in the block signal cabin, which they have since erected, there is a diagram done by their own draughtsman, a diagram of a railway station called Ballycarrery Railway Station, with an up and down platform in it, and a little station house; and, as a matter of fact, there are four spare levers put into that signal cabin, that are at present idle, for the purpose of working that station.

31818. Have they provided a passing place?—They are provided with a passing place.

31819. So that there are two lines of railway?—It is a double line. It is the main line from Cook to Dublin.

31820. Lord Fermoy.—There it did not require any passing place?—No. And the Postal Authorities have recognised the importance of the district to the extent that there are telegraph posts near that level crossing, and within a quarter of a mile of the place a post office and telegraph office.

31821. Chairman.—What you say is that you were distinctly promised accommodation for your butter traffic and passenger traffic, and now you have not got it?—Yes.

31822. And that promise was made in 1900?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. SEARON.

31823. It is a distance of nine miles between the two stations. Are the people of the district much inconvenienced by the distance between the two existing stations?—They are very much inconvenienced. It takes the people a round of seven miles to get to Charleville Railway Station, and they can only bring one load in a day.

31824. The two stations are Charleville and Ballycarrery?—Yes.

31825. And this was to come in midway?—About midway.

31826. You say that the new station would have brought a good deal of passenger traffic, in addition to what you would bring?—There is no doubt about it, and the want of the station is a great handicap to the creamery, because we have to send that butter such a long way, and, in the summer time, in broiling heat, we cannot send it to market readily, and there is a reduction in price.

31827. Would it, as well as affording accommodation, to the people in the district, add to the traffic of the line?—Of course, the presumption always is that increased facilities will bring increased traffic.

31828. Do you think you would have got it if you had not asked them to take coals there, as they were willing to give it for passenger and butter traffic?—They were willing to do for passenger and butter traffic. We never insisted on coal.

31829. The first signs of a disposition to refuse was after you had asked for coal to be taken there?—I do not know whether that influenced them or not. It may have.

31830. Has the provision of a block cabin any relation to your request for a station?—Not the slightest. It is the greatest silliness to mention that. It was a block station that was asked for. We had no intrest whatever in a block cabin.

31831. Is the block cabin for the convenience of the company? Has in any connection with public needs?—Not at all; but their own private needs.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

31832. There have been three phrases used—station, block station, and block cabin. I do not think that the company ever promised a station, but a block station?—They promised a station to take passengers.

31833. In the letter which you have read, what they promised was a block station?—But, in one of the letters I read they promised to take butter and passengers.

31834. You did not read that?—It is dated the 25th of September, 1900, from the Dublin manager's Office, Dublin.—"I beg to inform you that the company will probably be prepared to accept consignments of butter at Ballycarrery Station, when erected, but regret that they will be unable to convey coal to the district, owing to the unsuitability of the station for such traffic."

Chairman.—That is the second time we have had that letter.

31835. Mr. Acworth.—But there is nothing there about passengers. All that they promised was that they would probably do something. They do not mention passengers there?—Of course passengers are meant always. Even verbally, to a shareholder who is chairman of our company, not only did they promise that they would take passengers, and that they would give a covered shed for the butter, and that they would make two platforms for the passengers.

31836. I do not in the least doubt that that is what you understood.

31837. Chairman.—There is no other construction that can be put on the letter. What is a station for except for passengers?

31838. Mr. Seaton.—A station for butter traffic implies passengers.

31839. Chairman.—The letter implies everything, except that they cannot provide for coal.

31840. Mr. Acworth.—There is no mention of passengers.

31841. Chairman.—There is not, of course.

31842. Mr. Acworth.—What the company promised was that they would put a block station there, and stop the trains there, and take in butter?—Butter and passengers.

31843. So you understood?—I distinctly understood, and the diagram in the signal house shows the station house and two platforms; and the diagram is there in the signal house for the public to see.

31844. As a matter of fact, though they got a block cabin, they did not stop any trains?—They did. They stop them every day—several trains in the day, whenever it suits their convenience to do so—passenger trains and goods trains.

31845. Not regularly, I suppose; but only on signal to stop them. You do not suggest that they stop at regular hours there?—Well I do not suppose they do. They work the block cabin for their own convenience.

31846. They do not take in passengers or goods, or anything else?—Indeed I am sorry to say they do not. That is just what we want them to do.

31847. Is there any using there?—No.

31848. And of course there are no passengers.

Examined by Colonel HERBERT PEE.

31849. Can you give an idea from the time that you first brought this proposition before the railway company, of what increase of output you had?—Yes, sir, I can.

31850. In 1900?—We started with butter produce in 1893.

31851. But 1900 was when you first asked them to give you a station?—In 1900 we had at least doubled our trade. In 1893 our output was 77 tons of butter, realising £8,035. We have developed the industry since to such an extent that our output now is 162 tons of butter, realising from £12,000 to £13,000 a year.

31852. That is between 1893 and the present time?—Yes.

31853. And 1892 was eight years before you brought the matter before the railway company?—In 1890 we established it.

31854. In 1900 you brought the question of increased facilities before the railway company—eight years after that?—Yes.

31855. And has there been a great increase of traffic between 1900, when you brought the matter

The long
distance
between
stations—
Charleville
and Ballycarrery
is a serious
inconvenience
to the district.

Company had
promised the
new station
for passengers
and butter
traffic.

The block
cabin provided
on condition
whenever with
the station
provided, but
not erected.

before there and the present time?—A great increase of traffic.

31850. Of course their contention, roughly speaking, is that that traffic would not justify them in going to the expense?—That is what they are contending.

31851. Chairman.—It is not so stated in the letter. There is not a word about it.

31852. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—I think, in this last letter it was stated that the matter was fully gone into—the letter addressed to the Rev. M. Morton, Parish Priest, Chairman of the Company. That is in the proof, dated May 1905.

31853. Chairman.—We have not had that.

31854. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—Please give the reference to that letter. It is on page four of your proof?—Where it is. I say I further wish to put in evidence a letter addressed to the Rev. E. Morton, P.P., Ballybay, from the Chairman of the Company, dated 16th May, 1905, in which he stated, in reply to Father Morton relative to the opening of a station at Ballyskenry crossing, between Chalmersville and Ballybay, that the matter was fully gone into in 1901, and that it was found that the circumstances did not warrant the providing of a station, and that their written promises, made in their correspondence with me in that year, were owing to a misunderstanding.

31855. Is not that the position I stated, that if any promise was given it was not done with the cognisance of the Board of Directors?—Yes. They have said the Board of Directors have passed the project, and that no time will be lost in carrying out the work. That is distinctly stated in one of the letters. (Letter handed to Chairman.)

31856. At any rate that is the position they took up in 1905—that the traffic did not justify their going to the expense of putting up this additional station?—They stated that in one letter, and they told me on another occasion that it was owing to the expense incurred in connection with the amalgamation that they could not go on with the station.

31857. Of course, that they were not in a position to do it. If they had been in a good financial position they would have put up the station; and the railway company's answer was that, owing to the expense involved, and to many other circumstances into which we need not enter, they were not justified in putting up a station for what they considered an insufficient traffic—I cannot say what influenced them, of course.

31858. But of course that in their letter, and if the expense involved would not be recouped by the additional traffic, you could hardly expect the railway company to do it?—It is an example which shows that we want a very great change in the system of management of the railways for developing the industries of the country.

31859. You admit that there might be differences of opinion, that one man might think that he was entitled to this additional accommodation, and, on the other hand, you would, I suppose, admit that the railway company ought to be in as good a position to judge whether the traffic would remunerate them or not?—I should say better.

31860. Then, if you admit that, I think the explanation of the railway company is fairly satisfactory?—But I think the working of the station there would bring them increased traffic.

31861. Might I ask you, is it owing to the want of a station that you do not get as good a price for your butter as you otherwise would?—I say that I could sell my butter better, because we have to take it a long distance to the railway.

31862. Are you of opinion that it is owing to this want of facilities for the carriage of your butter, and the necessity of carrying it four or five miles to the railway, under the heat of summer, say, that you are unable to get as good a price?—Yes.

31863. Now, having stated that, can you give me any idea of the percentage of loss which this want of facilities entails upon you?—Well, of course I could not, because the butter is sold for what it is worth, and I could not ascertain the loss that may be entailed.

31864. We will assume that your butter fetches £5 a hundred-weight. I think that is the approximate figure of the best butter in the market, and we will assume that this fetches £5 a hundred-weight?—Yes.

31865. We will take that as the rough figure, and that in consequence of the damage which it incurs owing to this lack of accommodation the price that it actually fetches is 50s. a hundred-weight?—I could not say what the actual loss would be.

31866. Surely if your loss is considerable you must have some idea of what it entails upon you?—I could not say. All I know is that it is a very great consideration to be able to market the butter cleanly and neatly, and that the presumption is that we lose in money if that is not the case, and it has to knock round a distance of four and a half miles.

31867. We all assume that butter must enter under such circumstances as that, but I want you to estimate the loss. You say your trade is worth £15,000 a year for the butter you export?—Yes.

31868. In your opinion, if you put it on the market in such a condition as you would like, what would it be worth?—I cannot say.

31869. Then, you cannot estimate?—I cannot estimate.

31870. The impression that your answer conveys to me is that the loss is so small that you cannot estimate it. It does not appear to me to be a very serious damage?—It may be a great loss, for all I know.

31871. Surely you should be in a position to estimate that loss?—Really I have no means of estimating my loss, as our butter is sold as it stands in the English market.

31872. Chairman.—Let us put it the other way. If this station had been there could you have produced the butter at, say, a saving of a farthing a pound?—I should say it would save a farthing a pound.

31873. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—That is what I wanted to get?—Alas, in that matter of the handling of our butter, it is very carefully handled by the railway company.

31874. Chairman.—I think you had better confine yourself to this. You estimate that you would save a farthing a pound?—Probably.

31875. Mr. Sanders.—Would it be £300 a year on your output?—Probably.

31876. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—We have had evidence from several gentlemen from that district, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Gibson?—Yes. Mr. Sanders was one of the men who helped to get the promise from the directors, and one of the men at the time of an election in the locality who went about asking the people were they aware that he was instrumental in procuring the station for us from the Great Southern and Western Company.

31877. Mr. Sanders.—Not the block station?—Not the block station.

31878. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—What position was he trying to get?—A County Councilship.

31879. He did not succeed?—He did not succeed.

31880. At any rate, he did not bring this point, which you have done, before us. He made no point of that, but he did tell us that he thought that some motor conveyance from outlying districts to Chalmersville would be of some assistance to the butter industry. Do you agree with that?—I certainly do; anything that would be the means of transporting it quickly and cheaply would be an advantage.

31881. Mr. Sanders also put that point before us, that within the last few years the Great Southern and Western Company established a motor service for that place, amongst others, and that owing to the disinclination and the obstruction of the people in the district they had to abandon it?—The only thing I saw in connection with the motor service was a disabled car at a station house there, and I never heard any more about it before or after.

31882. Then you think that the failure of the motor service was owing to its being an inefficient service or a service not properly equipped?—I could not really say.

31883. Lord Pirrie.—I take it from your evidence, generally, to the Chairman and Mr. Serben, that you consider the railway company should carry out their promise, and that if they did you believe the company would gain by the additional traffic, and encourage a passenger traffic?—Certainly.

Oct. 18, 1907.

Th. C. Walsh,
Secretary of the Ballybay
Butter
Company.

The annual loss to the Ballybay Butter Company owing to the want of railway facilities.

The provision of a motor service for the district in connection with Chalmersville Station recommended.

A motor service established by the Great Southern Company and abandoned.

The desirability of the railway company carrying out their promise to provide a station at Ballyskenry urged.

Oct. 12, 1907.
 Mr. C. Walsh,
 Secretary
 Railway
 Dairy
 Company.
 Reimbursement
 of the railways
 and control by
 an Irish
 authority re-
 commended.

Mr. William
 Pedlow,
 Representative
 of the
 Lurgan Urban
 District
 Council.

Reasonable
 local rates for
 eggs and
 poultry from
 Great Northern
 Railway
 Stations to
 Lurgan.

Complaint
 as to excessive
 through rates
 for dead
 poultry from
 Lurgan to
 English
 Stations.

Some reduction
 rates conceded
 under the
 Railway
 Commission
 speed of the
 present inquiry.

Good work
 done by the
 Vice-Royal
 Commission.

31881. Mr. Scobie.—Would State purchase be of general advantage with regard to the proper management of the Irish railway system?—I think the first essential in any attempt to revive the industries of the country is to change the present system. State purchase, I should say, would be the solution of it.

31882. By Ireland—that Ireland should acquire the lines and work them by an Irish authority?—The management should be Irish, efficient management.
 31883. Ireland should be the purchaser if a plan could be satisfactorily arranged?—Certainly.

Mr. WILLIAM PEDLOW examined by the CHAIRMAN.

31884. I think you are a member of the firm of George J. Walsh, Limited?—Yes; Lurgan.

31885. And you are a member of the Urban District Council?—I am not.

31886. Have you been deputed by them to come here?—Yes; I have.

31887. To speak on their behalf?—Yes.

31888. Now, what railway serves your district?—The Great Northern of Ireland, exclusively.

31889. And what particular traffic do you wish to refer to?—The exporting of Irish produce—poultry and eggs.

31890. Now, what particular counties do you wish to bring under our notice?—We draw our main supplies from Antrim, Armagh, Down, Tyrone, Monaghan and Louth.

31891. And all those districts are served by this one railway?—Yes.

31892. Now, is the traffic collected for those places and brought to some central depot of yours?—Yes, at Lurgan.

31893. And then you make it up for export or retail sale as required?—They are all for export.

31894. Now, in regard to existing rates, I presume you do not wish to make any general complaint?—No; we have found the Great Northern Railway Company have always treated us very well in regard to rates.

31895. I am speaking of local rates?—Local rates, yes.

31896. Now, with regard to through rates?—Well, we have something to complain of there.

31897. That is, from Lurgan to towns in England?—Yes, to towns in England.

31898. Do you say that the through rates are in excess of the powers of the company to charge?—I believe they are.

31899. Have you any proof of that?—Well, I have it from the Acts of Parliament, as to the amounts that they are allowed to charge for mileage carriage.

31900. Now, let us see if we can follow it for a moment. Never mind the Acts of Parliament. Just give us an instance of some through rate, say Lurgan to London, if you like?—Lurgan to London?

31901. Let us have the rate—and, first of all, what is it for?—Dead poultry.

31902. Now, dead poultry, Lurgan to London?—302 miles.

31903. What is the rate?—It is a contract rate which we get.

31904. What is the rate?—4s. 6d. is the special rate.

31905. Per what?—Per cent.

31906. Mr. Scobie.—Owner's risk?—Owner's risk.

31907. Chairman.—Now, Lurgan to Leeds. What is the special rate for the same articles?—Lurgan to Leeds, 4s. 6d.

31908. The same as to London?—The same as to London.

31909. What is the distance?—The distance to Leeds is 220 miles.

Colonel PIERCE.—I think you make a mistake. I think it is 4s. 3d. (Witness).—That is reduced within the last fortnight. These rates have all been reduced since I sent in this evidence, six months ago. There is a whole lot of things remedied since I sent in this evidence.

31910. Lord Pirbright.—Then the Commission has been doing good work?—It has been doing very good work, I can assure you.

31911. Chairman.—It may shorten our proceedings. There is no use in beating a dead horse?—Some of the rates are reduced and some are not.

31912. They may be in process of being altered?—No; I think these are not.

Colonel PIERCE.—It is all on the question of English rates. In point of fact we charge here really less than they charge in England. Mr. Pedlow, having drawn attention to some of these rates from Lurgan the English companies have reduced some of the rates from their ports, and our rates have been reduced in proportion. I found they had not gone to the full extent that Mr. Pedlow had drawn attention to, but if there is anything wrong in any of them I am sure the English people will set it right.

31913. Chairman.—I am glad to hear that. At any rate you must benefit, to a certain extent, from those reductions?—The reductions are so slight that we benefit very little.

31914. But still you do benefit?—Oh, yes, we benefit a little.

31915. Have you through rates to all parts of England?—We have to all parts of England.

31916. By the North Eastern?—No. We have inside the last week.

31917. I believe the North Eastern have been refusing for years past, and they have now conceded it?—It has been settled within the last week.

31918. In view of this concession, how much of your evidence do you think it important now to state?—It is very hard to say, but still, with these reductions, I would like to draw your attention to the inequality of the rates. If you turn to the tables you will see where they are grouped according to the distance.

31919. The table for through rates for different parts of the country?—Yes, according to mileage.

31920. For passenger trains?—Yes, according to mileage. In the group from 100 to 200 you have the rate to a place 150 miles 2s. 10d., and to thirty three miles further, it is only 4s. 6d.

31921. Now, you have got a long list here?—Yes.

31922. Do you object to these being printed on the notes?—Not the slightest.

31923. Now, don't you think that if I read in these rates just as you have given them that would meet your case?—It would. But there is only one thing I would like to say, that in calculating the maximum rates I was guided by the Blue-books and Acts of Parliament that I had, and I have found out since that a judgment given in a case that was brought before the Railway Commission in England upsets the way I calculated, and upsets the whole effect and spirit of the Act of Parliament.

31924. You tried to be your own lawyer?—That is so.

31925. Mr. Asquith.—What judgment was that?—I could not say what it was.

Colonel PIERCE.—I assume that that difficulty would arise in this way, that where the sea interference that method of working out the actual distance would not operate.

31926. Chairman.—But if the figures are not misleading I wish to put them on the notes.

31927. Mr. Scobie.—If you strike out the column stating "excess over maximum."

31928. Mr. Asquith.—Strike out all the last three.

31929. Colonel Hutchinson.—It is impossible for anyone to ascertain what the legal maximum is.

31930. Chairman.—Mr. Pedlow, you should strike all those columns out, the legal maximum, the excess maximum and the excess ordinary?—I think you should, sir. I cannot stand over them. Now, having struck out those columns, there is a point in connection with that which I would like to emphasize, and it is this, that Acts of Parliament should be so drawn that traders can check their rates, not that anybody can drive a coach and four through them.

(Widely headed in the following amended list of rules:—)

TABLE of Through Rates for Dead Poultry per Passenger Train from Lurgan to English stations

Town.	Miles From Lancaster.	Special Contract Rate Per Cwt.	Ordinary Rate Per Cwt.
Arrington, ..	190	4 4	4 4
Asoci, ..	230	5 3	5 4
Attleboro, ..	106	6 0	6 3
Barnes, ..	358	8 0	4 5
Barnstable, ..	416	7 0	10 0
Barnstable, ..	234	6 7	5 9
Bath, ..	380	3 8	7 7
Beverly, ..	181	3 8	4 11
Bridgport, ..	189	2 5	3 0
Boston, ..	381	3 8	4 0
Beverly, ..	202	3 8	5 4
Boston co-Track, ..	377	4 8	8 8
Boston, ..	346	4 8	9 8
Bridgewater, ..	255	4 12	7 4
Bristol, ..	370	5 8	7 7
Bristol, ..	220	4 8	5 11
Bourne, ..	454	7 8	10 9
Braintree, ..	429	6 10	7 3
Bridgewater, ..	384	4 10	7 4
Bristol, ..	378	2 8	8 10
Bridgewater, ..	318	3 0	5 3
Boston, ..	308	2 8	4 10
Boston, ..	304	4 1	7 3
St. Barnabaz, ..	368	8 0	8 1
Boston, ..	164	3 8	3 8
Boston, ..	333	6 0	5 5
Boston-on-Thames, ..	380	4 10	8 0
Boston, ..	435	5 8	10 4
Boston, ..	189	4 8	5 5
Boston, ..	220	3 8	—
Boston, ..	302	4 8	7 4
Boston, ..	328	4 8	5 5
Boston, ..	380	5 8	9 0
Boston, ..	182	2 0	2 6
Boston, ..	380	4 8	8 7
Boston, ..	381	4 10	9 5
Boston, ..	312	3 8	4 0
Boston, ..	413	5 8	5 5
Boston, ..	355	4 10	7 2
Boston, ..	350	5 5	5 5
Boston, ..	183	3 5	5 7
Boston, ..	448	8 8	10 2
Boston, ..	380	4 10	5 11
Boston, ..	404	5 5	9 0
St. Ann's on Sea, ..	505	3 6	4 4
Boston, ..	304	3 6	5 0
Boston, ..	245	4 6	5 11
Boston, ..	218	3 8	5 0
Boston, ..	458	8 9	10 2
Boston, ..	388	4 8	5 2
Boston, ..	435	5 5	9 4
Boston, ..	380	4 9	7 4
Boston, ..	321	3 0	4 5

TABLE showing Inequalities of Rates, according to Oct 18, 1907
mileage, from Laryan to English stations.

Towns.	Mileage.	Special Contract Rates.	Ordinary Rates.	—	Mr. William Peddie, Representative of the Larges Urban District Council.
		s. d.	s. d.		Table of through rates for fund payable per passenger train from Lurgan to English Stations.
Farnhambury, ..	142	3 0	3 6		
Flitwood, ..	150	3 0	3 6	110	
Barnes, ..	148	3 0	4 5	50	
Liverpool, ..	152	3 0	3 6	100	
Blackpool, ..	169	3 0	3 9	nil.	
Frederic, ..	169	3 0	3 5		
St. Anne-on-Sea, ..	183	3 0	4 4		
Blackburn, ..	191	3 0	4 11	100	
Southport, ..	185	3 0	4 11	50	
Astrington, ..	186	3 10	4 10	nil.	
Ilkley, ..	188	4 0	4 3		
Salmon, ..	201	3 0	4 0		
Chatter, ..	202	0 0	4 10	100	
Bensley, ..	202	0 0	3 4	50	
Manchester, ..	212	3 0	4 0	120	
Stockport, ..	204	3 0	5 0	nil.	
Radcliffe, ..	220	4 0	5 13		
Kendal, ..	220	5 0	—		
Leeds, ..	225	4 0	0 0		
Widensworth, ..	231	2 0	6 3	120	
Huddersfield, ..	250	4 0	0 2	50	
Shrewsbury, ..	240	4 0	5 11	100	
Boston, ..	245	4 0	0 0	nil.	
Barnley, ..	254	4 7	5 0		
Wolverhampton, ..	268	4 0	7 4		
Sheffield, ..	268	4 0	0 0		
Carlisle, ..	276	3 0	5 20	100	
Birmingham, ..	277	4 0	7 4	50	
Barnes-on-Thames, ..	277	4 0	6 5	100	
Leicester, ..	300	4 0	0 0	nil.	
Levensham, ..	309	4 0	5 7		
Derby, ..	304	4 0	7 1		
Cheltenham, ..	315	5 0	0 0	100	
Reading, ..	322	4 10	7 2	50	
Exeter, ..	306	4 10	7 4	100	
Oxford, ..	332	4 10	7 5	nil.	
Bedford, ..	350	0 0	7 7		
Bath, ..	360	5 0	7 7		
Reading, ..	360	4 10	8 11		
Cambridge, ..	362	4 10	7 4	170	
London, ..	372	4 0	7 4	50	
Hatley-on-Thames, ..	380	4 10	6 0	100	
Maidenhead, ..	381	4 10	0 0	nil.	
Amst, ..	384	0 0	6 4		
Almarham, ..	390	6 0	4 0		
S. Farnborough, ..	396	5 0	8 1		
Northampton, ..	400	5 0	0 0		
Bognor, ..	404	5 0	0 0	400	
Windsor, ..	413	5 0	0 4	400	
Southampton, ..	420	4 0	10 0	100	
Portsmouth, ..	445	0 0	10 0	0 0	
Bournemouth, ..	450	7 0	10 0	50	
Brecon, ..	450	7 0	10 0	0 0	
Hatfield, ..	450	0 0	10 4	nil.	

Mr. William
Fellow,
Representative
of the
Luzon Urban
District
Council

Table of through rates for dead poultry per passenger train from Lyons to English Stations.

Oct 12, 1907.

Mr. William
Fellow,
Representa-
tive of the
Lurgan Urban
District
Council.

Table showing Through Rates from Belfast to English stations, via Glasgow and Holyhead, compared to Rates from Lurgan to same stations.

	Special Rate Per Cwt.	Ordinary Rate Per Cwt.
Lurgan to Liverpool,	3 0	3 6
Belfast to Liverpool,	2 6	3 0
Preference in favour of Belfast, ..	0 6	0 6
Lurgan to London,	4 6	7 0
Belfast to London,	4 0	6 0
Preference in favour of Belfast, ..	—	1 0
Lurgan to Manchester,	3 0	4 0
Belfast to Manchester,	2 0	3 0
Preference in favour of Belfast, ..	0 0	1 0
Lurgan to Birmingham,	4 9	7 4
Belfast to Birmingham,	4 0	6 0
Preference in favour of Belfast, ..	0 0	2 0
Lurgan to Oxford,	4 10	7 0
Belfast to Oxford,	4 0	6 0
Preference in favour of Belfast, ..	0 0	1 0

Suggestion
that railway
powers as to
charges should
be placed
in the hands
of the
Traders'.

31931. Nobody could object to that. That is quite a reasonable suggestion.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

31932. Do you think that it is one of the gravest defects that can be stated against any system of transport, that the financial conditions on which it is open to traders should be ascertained satisfactorily?—Yes.

31933. Here you have had all this trouble in considering this question and preparing this table, and now you find that owing to some obscure decision, your calculations are upset?—Yes.

31934. Do you consider it essential that a transit system that affects the interests of everybody in the country should be conducted on conditions known to the public or easily ascertainable by them?—Yes; I certainly do.

31935. Are you in favour of making the lines of this country public property?—Yes; I am in favour of State purchase.

31936. Do you think they should be conducted by an authority responsible to the people of this country?—Responsible to Parliament.

31937. And suppose that an arrangement could be made whereby an Irish authority would be created by Act of Parliament; do you think the public interest would be best served by having an authority responsible to Ireland?—I do not quite follow.

31938. Suppose an Act of Parliament were passed creating an Irish authority, a representative authority, an authority responsible to the people of this country; do you think that such an authority would be likely to conduct the transit system on conditions most fair to traders and the community?—I do.

31939. Now, I want to ask you a question more, and only one. It is sometimes suggested, in relation to such trades as yours, the poultry and egg trade, that even though the rate may be excessive the excess is so small that it really matters nothing, because the rate upon one chicken or one egg would be very little, not worth talking about; but is that a reasonable way of ascertaining it?—No, it is not; you should go into the question of collection and hundreds of things.

31940. What affects the business of your firm would be the total sum for carriage on your transactions for the year?—Yes.

31941. And then in any assignment to a market, whether it be a ton or a ewe, it is the rate upon the whole consignment, not upon the individual chicken or the individual egg, that affects your interest?—Yes.

31942. In relation to your competitors?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

31943. How do you sell your stuff—do you compare it to salmon?—No, sir; we do not, and anybody is a fool that does.

31944. What do you do?—We sell it to the retailers in England.

31945. Direct?—Direct.

31946. And how is the price fixed?—The price is fixed in this way. We quote them a price, and if they buy cheaper from anybody else they buy it. It is pure business competition.

31947. And, of course, the railway rate comes out of the price that you get?—Yes.

31948. And I see in the matter of rates that you have taken a great deal of trouble with them, and you have found it a rather intricate subject, have you not, these railway rates?—I do not know whether a lawyer could understand it or not, but I am very sure no business man could.

31949. And you have found it difficult?—Yes.

31950. In spite of your trouble you have made some mistakes here?—Yes.

31951. Do you think that anyone could make out railway rates as easily as look up a price in a book, though I have heard it said that that is not always easy?—No; they could not.

31952. And do you know that these railway rates with which you have had such trouble took weeks and weeks of time to work out in Parliament, and Parliament did its best?—Well, their best is a very poor best.

31953. Just tell me this. You have got some enormously high rates here?—Yes.

31954. You have got some that run over 10s a cwt, to Portsmouth, Southampton, and other places, all of which are high, everyone of these over 10s?—Yes.

31955. You will agree with me, I think, that it is wrong out that legal maximum on the principle of taking sea and land it would be something like 6s, or something of that kind?—Including the total distance, sea and land.

31956. Taking the maximum, including sea and land, it would come to about 6s. Is not that right?—Yes.

31957. Then that seems to imply that either the railways get more than their maximum or else that the ship gets not only as much per mile as the land charge, but 4s in addition?—Yes.

31958. In the 6s you give the ship credit for its mileage at the maximum legal rate for the railway?—Yes.

31959. If that 6s. rate is to be justified as within the legal maximum for the railway part of the journey the ship is getting 4s. extra beyond its full mileage proportion?—Yes.

31960. These are through rates?—They are through rates.

31961. So they can only have four terminals?—Two, in my idea.

31962. Three might, I think, be four—two in Ireland and two in England. That would only add another throughfare.

31963. So that the ship would get 3s. 6d. in addition to its mileage proportion?—Yes.

31964. And do you understand it—I don't—I don't.

Examined by Colonel HURCHMAN, P.M.

31965. With regard to these rates, as Mr. Acworth has pointed out, the maximum rate should be 7s or 8s?—Yes.

31966. And I see the ordinary rate, you say, is 12s to these places—Portsmouth, Southampton, and so on—10s 6d., 10s 3d., and 10s 4d.; but the rate you are getting is really 3s per cwt. below that?—Yes.

31967. Do you not think that is a very fair reduction. I mean, if you had actually sent your best poultry 100 miles in this country the maximum rate which the company would charge would be about 4s?—3s. 4d.

31968. So that for 100 miles in this country you are charged 3s. 4d., and for another hundred miles by sea and land you are only charged 3s. per cwt. of the ordinary rate. The ordinary rate to Southampton and Portsmouth is 10s 6d. and 10s 3d., and they give you a rate of 6s 6d., which is, roughly speaking, 3s per cwt. lower?—Yes.

The necessity
for a system
by which
freight rates
and conditions
can be more
easily inter-
related.

State pro-
tection and
public control
by an elected
Irish authority
recommended.

Any saving in
the cost of
transport of
such
importance to
traders when
competition
exists.

31966 You say in the last page of your proof that you think the powers which the Department have, under the 17th section of the Act, to procure lower rates, are non-existent, but I see in the last report a case where they dealt with the question of rates in the matter of eggs and poultry, and where they succeeded in getting the rate reduced from 4s. to 3s. 4d. per cwt. That is the only case that bears on your special industry, poultry and eggs, but in that particular instance their intervention was successful in procuring a reduction from 4s. to 3s. 4d. per cwt. Do you not think that a decided reduction?—Yes.

31967 And therefore—I do not know whether you have invoked their assistance?—I did.

31968 You got no benefit?—Yes; since I sent in my evidence I have got some benefit; and my evidence was sent in over six months ago and a lot of things have happened since. There is one thing to which I would like to draw the attention of the Commission—that Belfast, shipping by Greenore, gets a preference over Lurgan.

31969 Chairman.—Just explain what you mean?—If you turn to the last table I gave you, it shows the rates from Lurgan via Greenore and Holyhead compared with the rates from Belfast. The table shows the rates from Belfast to English towns via Greenore and Holyhead as compared with the rates from Lurgan to the same towns. From Lurgan to Liverpool the rate is 3s. From Belfast, which is twenty miles farther (and the train comes through Lurgan in or out), the rate is 2s. 6d., so that they get a preference of 6d. a cwt.

31970 Now, have they set that right?—No.

31971 That is not one of the things remedied?—No.

31972 That is under correspondence now?—No, it is not under correspondence at all.

31973 Why don't you raise that question?

Colonel Pless.—It is a very simple question.

31974 Lord Purvis.—Do I understand you to say

that from Belfast via Greenore they deliver goods at 2s. 6d., whereas from Lurgan they charge you 3s. 1?—Yes.

31975 Chairman.—Of course we know what it is.

31976 Lord Purvis.—The competition by sea.

Colonel Pless.—Lurgan is an inferior station, and the Belfast port rates and the Nerry port rates are about—(SPEAKING).—But why should they carry this stuff for 6d. less?

31977 Chairman.—Because if they did not carry it at 6d. less they would not carry it at all.

31978 Lord Purvis.—You send nearly all by Greenore?—Yes, because it is a quicker service.

31979 Mr. Sexton.—Would the judgment lead you to think that the rates which you had supposed to be above the maxima were all within them?—I do not think they are all within them. There are some still outside.

31980 Would not the judgment given lead you to change your view as to the others?—The way I took it was this, that the judge decided that every place that goods were transhipped constituted a fresh terminal.

Colonel Pless.—And that there would have to be a fresh journey?—A fresh journey.

31981 Mr. Dowd.—Can you give me any idea of the case brought before him?—It was a case brought before the Railway Commission in England.

31982 Recently?—Recently.

31983 Can you tell me what place it went or what goods or anything?—I cannot.

31984 I cannot remember anything that is connected with this matter?—It was one of the chief inspectors of the Department of Agriculture that told me.

31985 You have not seen it yourself?—No; he reported the matter to me.

31986 Mr. Sexton.—Would you wish to put in the idea distinguishing those which on that judgment are not within the maxima?—I have not had time to work it out.

Oct. 19, 1907.

—
Mr. W. H. H. Jones,
Representative
of the
Lurgan Urban
District
Council.

Great Northern
Company's
explanation
as to sea
competition
and the
disparity as
through rates.

A recent
legal decision
as to the
number of
terminal
charges
included in a
through rate.

The Commission adjourned till Monday, the 21st October.

FIFTY-THIRD PUBLIC SITTING—MONDAY, OCTOBER 21st, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, Bart., Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FISKE, P.C.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Mr. W. RYDON HILL examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Oct. 21, 1907.
Mr. W. Rydon Hill,
Representative of the
Drogheda Chamber of
Commerce.

31995. You appear on behalf of the Drogheda Chamber of Commerce?—Yes, sir.

31996. You are President of the Chamber of Commerce?—Yes, sir.

31997. I suppose the Chamber consists of merchants and traders interested in the port of Drogheda?—Yes, a great many of them.

31998. It is a representative Chamber?—It is.

31999. And are you acquainted with the trade of the port?—I am very well acquainted with it.

32000. What is the principal cause of complaint with regard to the rates that you have mentioned?—Most of the traders here all got complaints. It is very hard to get them to give specific particulars, however, and especially since the coasting steamer has been removed. I mentioned in my evidence that we have a coasting steamer.—

32001. I will come to that directly?—It has been withdrawn, and since then it is very hard, indeed, to get traders to give me, as president, any facilities, through the fear that they will do themselves harm. I could not collect the evidence as I should have been able to do.

32002. Do you mean that that feeling is prevalent amongst the traders; do you know it?—I do.

32003. And that facts would otherwise be brought under our notice?—Undoubtedly. Since the boat has left trading with us, a trader told me that last week the rates have been raised since 1st October. She left off trading, I think, in the end of August, or the beginning of September.

32004. From the 1st October there has been a general increase?—I have been advised that the traders have been informed that the rates would be raised to the old standard that they had to pay before the steamer-boat was put on.

32005. What is the chief cause of complaint—what particular traffic does it affect?—Well, bacon, and corn, and groceries of all kinds. Of course a great deal of it comes in to small traders in small quantities.

32006. Am I right in assuming that the complaint is that the rates for large quantities are not considered too high, but that the rates for smaller quantities are too high?—It is, decidedly.

32007. That is the complaint?—That is the complaint.

32008. That is to say that the trade does not lend itself to large quantities, and that for the small quantities the rate is excessive?—It is.

32009. That is your evidence?—That is my evidence, particularly on the Irish railways.

32010. Can you give us one example of that statement?—Here is a bill I received just before I came away, from my own firm, McGeen and Hill. There is a small quantity of oatmeal going down to the South of Ireland, through Dublin, on which they have to pay 2s. 3d., on the 70 lb., and I consider that is excessive.—

32011. One minute. This is under three cwt.?—It is.

32012. And is charged under the small scale rate?—The small scale rate?

32013. Yes. But can you give me the through rate from Cork?—35s.

32014. For what?—Oatmeal.

32015. Now, then, supposing a consignment is less

than five cwt.?—It would work out at 13s. 4d. a ton.

32016. That does not seem out of proportion?—Perhaps it is not, but it is very high, as compared with the average from Belfast. If we had to compete—that is where the shoe pinches us—we cannot oppose them. Our position is in the very centre of Ireland, on the east coast, and we cannot sell oatmeal against Belfast in Cork, owing to the rate by sea.

32017. That is inevitable, I suppose, where there is a free passage by sea?—I suppose we must take it as that.

32018. Well, now, the rate you mention to Cork, the difference between the small quantities and the large quantity does not appear to be excessive?—Excessive.

32019. The other instances you give are about the same proportion?—Would you not think that the Limerick rate was too high?

32020. Just mention it?—15s. 11d.

32021. From Drogheda to Limerick?—Yes, and forty miles nearer than Cork.

32022. The rate to Limerick is 15s. 11d., and the rate to Cork is 15s., although Limerick is forty-three miles nearer than Cork. I dare say the railway companies will tell us, but there seems to be an explanation that from Drogheda to Cork there is an open sea?—Probably that is it. They have to grant rates that are carried from Dublin to Cork.

32023. Well, now, what about the cross-Channel rates?—The cross-Channel rates to Liverpool are very moderate, but once you go inland it is prohibitive, especially for small quantities, and, of course, I am only speaking now for our own trade.

32024. What is your trade?—Oatmeal. We do a large trade with England, all in small quantities, because it is necessary that oatmeal should be fresh, and quantities; it should not be taken in large quantities owing to the necessity of having it fresh, and we find a great difficulty in doing with such places as Birmingham, Nottingham, Derby, and all the Midlands.

32025. That is a question entirely for the British railway companies?—I suppose so.

32026. You admit the rate to Liverpool is moderate?—It is moderate and fair, and the through traffic to the other lines runs up, and it is the same case with us in Drogheda. The Great Northern serves the town fairly well, but when you come to get through rates they mount up tremendously.

32027. Are the rates generally for the Great Northern satisfactory to you?—Oh, yes, they are very anxious to facilitate in all ways our trade. I am speaking personally, they are most anxious to meet us in anything that is fair and reasonable.

32028. Well, now, so much for the goods traffic. I gather that your trade must be in small quantities, because it is necessary that oatmeal should be fresh, and you would like to see the smalls rate reduced?—I would.

32029. From 3 cwt. to 2 cwt.?—Yes, or even less.

32030. Of course, but the 3 cwt. would be a considerable advantage?—It would be a great advantage.

32031. Have you anything to say about the passenger train service to your district?—You appear on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce?—The only complaint I have in that regard is the train service to

Complaints that the Great Northern Company have generally increased. Cattle Drogheda rates.

The fear of offending the company deters traders from giving evidence.

The excessive rates for small consignments must tell by traders.

A consignment of oatmeal... Drogheda is Cork instance.

Trim with the Midland line. We cannot get over to Trim to the Assam in time except by going the night before. We cannot get into Trim until 11.40, and for a journey that is too late. I have been fined myself I live about three miles from Drogheda.

32021. Where is Trim?—It is the centre of Meath.

32022. Of course it is a cross-country business. I suppose you have to change?—Yes. It would be met if we got a train that leaves at 8.10 to take passengers. It has passenger carriages on it, but it has not a horse or whatever it is to carry passengers until it gets to Navan, and then it takes passengers on from that.

32023. That seems a tangible proposal. There is a train leaves with a passenger coach, but they won't take passengers from your station, but they will from further on?—I suppose they take them from Navan up the line—that is down towards Oldcastle.

32024. Mr. Jervis.—The Midland Great Western Railway runs passenger carriages?—I think it will be the Great Northern Railway.

32025. Navan to Killesnoe line?—It is the Great Western.

32026. Then the Great Northern Railway do not carry passengers and the Midland do?—I dare say there is a train from Navan to Killesnoe, but we cannot get that train.

32027. There is a train from Navan to Killesnoe, but it does not take passengers?—Yes.

32028. Chairman.—With that exception, Mr. Hill, you have no complaint whatever about the railway company?—Very little.

32029. And you are satisfied with the arrangements generally?—I am, if we could get lower rates for small quantities.

Examined by Mr. SEYMOUR.

32030. You are a manufacturer of oatmeal?—Yes.

32031. You complain of the want of through rates in certain cases, particularly to the South?—And to Bury and the North. We are sending all over the country.

32032. Do you understand that any one company can refuse a through rate?—We cannot get a rate with the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford?—I believe it is now called the Dublin and Eastern Company's Railway to Wexford or Dungarvan—nor can we get it to the South, to Skibbereen or Bantry or these small places.

32033. No matter how many companies may be concerned in a rate it appears that any one can perjure the rest, so far as the through rate is concerned?—At present there is none.

32034. That is surely a very bad system?—It is a bad system.

32035. Would you say that there ought to be an obligation to give a through rate on any route where there is a current of traffic?—I certainly should.

32036. As to the coasting steamers, we had evidence in February last that the cessation of these steamers was to be apprehended in consequence of the course pursued by the railways. You say they have ceased now?—They ceased in the end of August—suddenly.

32037. And immediately after the railway rates were raised to the old standard?—Not till the last October.

32038. The evidence was that the rates remained unaltered in the rate-book—that they were not altered by the railway companies in consequence of the running of the steamers, but that they competed with the steamers by rebate?—Well, now, in our case that was not done. They reduced it on the monthly account from 6s. to 5s., and from 5s. to 4s.

32039. Can you say it was altered in the rate-book?—I could not say.

32040. For all you know, then, it may have been done by leaving the rate-book unaltered?—I think it was unaltered. I remember it having been referred to by the station-master.

32041. It was not altered, but a lower rate was put into the account?—Yes.

32042. That would be illegal?—They gave us a rate of 6s. usually for two-ton lots of oatmeal to Dublin before the steamers, and while the steamers were running we got it at 5s.

32043. And now it is back at the old figure?—It is back to 5s. 6s. or 6s.

32044. The concession, having got rid of the competition, is now withdrawn?—Yes.

32045. According to the evidence of Mr. Hanna,

the system was to leave the rate unaltered and give a rebate. If that were so, all that was necessary for the railway company to do when the steamer ceased was just to continue to impose the rate in the rate-book, simply withdrawing the rebates—if Mr. Hanna's evidence was correct. The rate-book would remain unaltered, but the rebate would be withdrawn?—In our case they never gave a rebate, but the rate was reduced.

32046. What do you say as to allowing a railway company, while not altering its rates, to give temporary rebates for the purpose of defeating competition, and then returning to the unaltered rates when the competition was over?—I think it is very unbusinesslike and very unfair.

32047. Would you say, if a railway company reduces its rates, either by an alteration of the rate book or by a rebate of the rate, leaving the rate nominally unaltered—that they ought to be obliged, when the competition was drawn out, to continue to take the lower rate?—Certainly; and we understand that the Truck Act would protect us in that. I do not know whether it was carried, but it does not.

32048. Lord Foster.—What has the Truck Act to do with it?—I was told the Truck Act would protect us, even if the boat was taken off, but it does not appear to be able to do it.

32049. Chairman.—How does the Truck Act come into it?—I understand that from 1898 the Truck Act came into operation, that no railway could again advance the rate. That was the impression.

32050. Whether that rate was given by way of an overt reduction in the rate book or by way of private rebate from the rate in the rate book?—That is so. I thought it was because of some canal traffic in England that this Truck Act was brought into existence.

32051. Mr. Jervis.—You misheard the word. Somebody said the Truck Act, not the Truck Act.

32052. Lord Foster.—The Truck Act only refers to manufacturers selling goods to their workers.

32053. Mr. Seaton.—The payment of wages in kind, and not in money?—I may have taken up the word wrong—Traffic Act.

32054. Can you say that the reduction given by the railway companies while the coasting steamers ran, made the railway rates less than or equal to the steamer rate?—Equal.

32055. Not less?—I do not think less. I did not hear of any case of loss; but it was more convenient for shopkeepers to get by rail, because the weather prevented the steamers coming, and we had sometimes days' delay. In that way it handicapped the steamer.

32056. Is there any probability of another line of steamers?—I am afraid not, unless we buy a boat.

32057. Your trade is necessarily conducted in small consignments?—In oatmeal particularly it is, but in Indian corn we get large quantities.

32058. Within the small parcels rate limit?—The oatmeal particularly.

32059. You send it generally less than 3 cwt?—As a general rule we do, but we make up a five-ton lot to Dublin.

32060. Do you know how the rate on small parcels is computed?—I do not.

32061. I will read it for you. "For small parcels by merchandise train, not exceeding in weight 5 cwt., the company may charge, in addition to the maximum rate for merchandise, and the maximum station and service terminal authorised by the schedule," and then follows the additional charge for each parcel, according to the class of goods to which it belongs, varying from 5d. to 1s. 6d. for each parcel, in addition to the maximum tonnage rate. Does that system work out oppressively in Ireland?—Very.

32062. Is it quite unsuitable for the country?—Oh, seriously.

32063. You think it ought to be repealed?—I do, certainly, for manufacturers in Ireland cannot stand it.

32064. For Ireland, even though it might suit England?—Yes.

32065. We had a witness here who said it was too late to try and develop or revive Irish industries by a reduction of rates. Do you accept that?—I do not agree with that at all.

32066. I find, by the Department's report for 1905 that (although the cross-Channel rates are, in your judgment, prohibitive) the export of oatmeal

Oct. 31, 1907.

Mr. W. Boyde, Esq.,
Representative of the
Drogheda Chamber of
Commerce.

The system of giving temporary concessions in order to defeat competition and then returning to the former rates condemned.

The operation of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act.

Suggested abolition of the "small" rate in Ireland.

The possibility of reviving Irish industries by a reduction of rates asserted.

Oct. 21, 1907.

Mr. W. Dwyer
J.B.A.
Representative
of the
Dublin
Chamber of
Commerce.

The possi-
bility of
increasing the
manufacture
and sale of
oats in
Ireland.

reached the value of £27,730-1-That was last year, and was owing partly to the bad crop of oats they had in England.

32065. Owing partly; but, if the cross-Channel rates were made fairer—the export rates—no doubt the exports would be increased?—They would, undoubtedly.

32066. And the imports of oatmeal into this country reached the value of £75,575. Now, looking to that import of oatmeal from outside, have you any reason to doubt that, if you had fairer inland rates?—I would keep it out.

32067. You would do that trade?—We would try to.

32068. How should it be then to say that it is too late to develop Irish industry by the reduction of rates?—It is not too late. I would not give up, any way.

32069. The gentleman I mentioned was able to give the railways an ultimatum. He was able to say—“Reduce the rates or I will remove my works out of Ireland,” and so he succeeded, but you cannot give such an ultimatum as that?—No.

32070. Irish traders generally have to stay in Ireland?—They have to stay.

32071. It appears that the system of rates, especially of small parcels rates, would need to be revised by public authority?—Yes; and easier facilities of getting the case met and adjudicated; and we have had the difficulty of not being able to approach anybody, owing to the expense of bringing it before the Board of Trade, or whatever course one would have to adopt.

32072. The Board of Trade has only persuasive functions, and no powers. Do you think if you failed to persuade an Irish railway company to give facilities that the Board of Trade is going to succeed with them?—I suppose it would not. We never tried.

32073. You have no faith in it, I suppose. Almost the court—whatever court you establish, so long as a company brought into court to defend itself chooses to employ leading counsel they impose upon the plaintiff the same expense, and, in that way, they frighten possible plaintiffs, and keep them out of court. As a matter of fact, the court fees of the Railway Commission are moderate—it is the fees of counsel that make it expensive?—I suppose so.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

32074. With reference to the through rates, I dare say you know that the law gives you power to propose a through rate over any number of railways?—Even for small quantities?

32075. Even for small quantities?—I was not aware.

32076. You have the power to write to the Railway and Canal Commission, and say, I claim that a through rate, whatever you propose, we will say to Dublin, shall be put into force, and, unless the railway companies object, it goes into force as a matter of course, after a certain time?—I was not aware.

32077. The law does give a remedy—I am not disagreeing with my friend, Mr. Sexton, as to the expense of many of the proceedings before the Railway Commission; I know that too—but the law does give a remedy, and you could, at any rate, begin to put it into force, with a very fair chance of success, at an expense that is not more than one sovereign?—That is moderate. I was not aware of it.

32078. Now, then, similarly, as to the coasting steamers—of course we have to hear the railway company—but, assuming your statement to be correct, that they did charge a rate of 6s., and then of 5s., and then of 4s., do you know that they cannot put the 4s. rate up again without the consent of the Railway Commission, if anybody objects?—I was not aware of that.

32079. If you write to the Commission, and object to this rate of 4s. being put up, if you do not appear in your own case, and do not go there at all, and there is no counsel, the railway company would have to give justification of their action before they would be able to raise it?—You must not misunderstand me. That rate of 4s. was for five-ton lots.

32080. There was the 5s. rate?—No, it was 4s.

32081. Chairman.—He said 4s., they were advanced?—(Hear, hear).—5s. was the rate for five-ton lots.

32082. Mr. Acworth.—That was brought down to 4s.

32083. Mr. Sexton.—The rate remained unaltered in the rate book.

32084. Mr. Acworth.—We will have to see what the railway companies have to say. Assuming your statement to be correct, that they brought down the rate from 5s. to 4s., they cannot put it up again without the consent of the Railway Commission, and you have not got to prove that it is wrong—they have got to prove that it is right. That is the law at present.

32085. Mr. Sexton.—If they altered the rate book?

32086. Mr. Acworth.—No. If the rate was changed, do you know that?—No.

32087. I suggest that you should look into that. I dare say you know, also, that it is illegal if they have changed a rate that is not in the rate book. They are bound to put the rate in the rate book when it is changed?—I did not know.

32088. If they altered it from 5s. to 4s., there was no excuse for not putting it in the rate book. But you have not inspected the rate book to see what was done?—I did not.

32089. The law cannot put itself in force?—If people do not know they cannot take advantage of it.

32090. You are not using the law that is in force. I do not say that it is perfect; but you have not used what is available?—I did not know.

32091. Chairman.—You did not know.

32092. Mr. Acworth.—That is the difficulty. There is a great deal of law we do not know.

32093. Lord Pearce.—All the witnesses and the same thing—every witness.

32094. Mr. Acworth.—Just the same thing. You have not been afraid to give evidence. You have come here?—Certainly.

32095. And I gather, in answer to the last question of the Chairman, when you raised this point about the difficulty of getting through rates, you think the rate for “small” is too big an addition?—I do.

32096. And you also think it is hard that people do not get the benefit of the train from Navan?—Yes.

32097. But apart from that you have not any great complaint?—No.

32098. That is what I understand. What about those people who have not the courage to come. What do you think of their attitude?—They grumble at the rates being exorbitant and high, but when I go to them I cannot get any evidence to bring before you. I could not collect any.

32099. Can you tell us what you think. Your complaints are not very strong?—No.

32100. Do you think that is the attitude of the other people?—I do, to a certain extent. Some of the grocer complain of the same sort of thing that we do—that the small parcels rate on groceries coming from Dublin, and from Ardee, and places of that sort—they cannot get them through at a moderate rate.

32101. They are not satisfied, any more than you are, but, what I wanted to get at was—do you think their complaints, if they had come here, would have been more serious than yours?—I do not think they are more serious, because they are not manufacturers but I look at our case as more important, because we employ a large lot of labour and we keep one of the largest mills in oatmeal in Ireland, going.

32102. What I am anxious to get at, whether, in consequence of this legislation about giving evidence, any very serious grievances have been kept back?—I do not think any very serious ones. I should not say that.

Examined by Lord PEARCE.

32103. Has the evidence which you have given been before the Chamber of Commerce?—Oh, yes.

32104. It is not your individual evidence. It is the unanimous opinion of your Chamber?—It is, sir.

32105. That makes it more important, and I am sure they are interested in what Mr. Acworth has told you. You speak of employing a large number of workers. Have you a surplus of workers in the district—are there many idle?—In the district we live in there are none.

32106. In other words, you could double the work and get sufficient men and women?—Yes.

32107. Without difficulty?—Yes.

32108. That shows that any reduction in rates that would assist you to extend the business would be beneficial to the district?—Certainly.

Suggested
provisions of
a cheap means
of having
traders'
complaints
adjudicated
upon.

The powers of
the Railway
and Canal
Commission as
to the mode
of through
rates and the
provision of
the railway
account
rules.

Instances of
rates at
Droghda
reduced by
Gt. Northern
Company and
raised again.

32101. We had a witness before as the other day—Colonel Crawford—who said a great deal of oatmeal was exported to America. You are the largest manufacturers of oatmeal in Ireland?—Yes.

32102. Have you exported any to America?—We always do.

32103. You do export?—Always do export to America. There is a large order waiting for meal now.

32104. For America?—For America.

32105. Then, it is a great advantage to have cheap rates to Liverpool?—It is.

32106. For the sake of getting there to export to America?—It is.

32107. I am very glad to hear it. There is no doubt, from the evidence you have given, that with lower rates you can increase your own business?—Certainly.

32108. Have you any difficulty in getting raw material—you have not to import?—We buy all in Ireland. We never import any.

32109. You grind and send it away from your own mill?—Yes.

32110. It is one of the industries that should be noticed all we possibly can?—We do not buy a pound of oats except what is grown in Ireland.

32111. Have you any special facilities from the railway companies to facilitate you in buying oats from the West and South of Ireland, as well as the North?—If we are getting a large quantity we approach the railway, and we get a very reasonable rate. It is not a steadfast thing.

32112. Do the railway companies not realise that for practically every ton of oats you get from the South you send back a ton of oatmeal? Do not the Great Northern realise that they benefit by the second traffic?—They gave a reasonable rate.

REV. H. O'BRIEN CHAIRMANED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

32122. Father O'Reilly, I think you are the President of St. Columba's College, Newry?—Yes, sir.

32123. And I think you are not engaged directly in trade and industry, but you have considered and given some attention to the railway problem?—I have. I had something to do with the movement for the railway extension from Bellinacorney to Newcastle, and took a deep interest in it.

32124. You are not a railway shareholder?—I am not.

32125. You have no financial interest in the railway?—No.

32126. I suppose you have formed some conclusion as to what in your judgment would be for the best interests of Ireland in connection with the railway system. First of all, do you agree with the suggestion that has been made here that there should be three trunk lines in the country?—Well, yes, I think that would be for the advantage of the country. I think the great grievance, at least one of the great grievances at the present time, is the fact that we have such a large number of baronial guaranteed lines which are not earning working expenses—and which might be worked economically and, I believe, advantageously to their districts if they were worked by the trunk lines.

32127. Taken over by the trunk lines?—Taken over by the trunk lines. I believe at the present time the State is losing considerably by them. Five per cent. was guaranteed on some of these baronial guaranteed lines, two per cent. of this is paid by the Treasury and three per cent. levied on the baronies in addition to any deficit of working expenses, and I believe if these lines were taken over by the trunk lines, though they would be no great acquisition (at all events), they could be worked very much better for the interests of their districts, and I think if the Treasury bought out the shareholders—it would be a very small matter, very little over a million of money would do the whole thing. It would be good for all parties.

32128. In other words, you would agree to State purchase if confined to these small baronial railways?—Certainly.

32129. But not to the purchase of the whole railways of the country?—I think not. Public opinion is practically unanimous that these smaller lines should be taken over. There are some in-

32133. They do! That is one of the important things. I think when we have got an important industry like yours, which connects agriculture in Ireland, the railway companies themselves should realise the benefit of giving reduced rates?—On the manufactured article, I may say, they do not give any facilities, but on the raw material, if we are bringing it in in reasonably large quantities, we do get from the Great Northern Railway Company reasonable facilities.

32134. You have got, evidently, fair arrangements with the railway companies for oats. That is all.

32135. Mr. O'Brien, Berrigraha, Salterstown. Would you ask about the through rates from Drogheda to Bangor?—Whether he ever wrote to the company to ask for it?—(Hesitant).—We have asked for it, two or three times.

32136. Can you give the date. It seems a reasonable thing, and we will make inquiries?—Mr. Plow, on last Tuesday—I applied to him on last Tuesday.

32137. On Tuesday?—That was the last time, but before that I think it was in May.

32138. Did he give any reason for not giving the rate?—He said he would inquire, that he did not understand it.

32139. I do not see any reason why there should not be a rate on the Great Southern and Western Railway. We will look into it.

32140. Mr. Ascroft.—Drogheda to Liverpool is by steamer directly?—It is.

32141. And would not be a railway rate at all?—It is, sometimes, because the service is only twice weekly, and if we get an order in a hurry we have to send by Dublin.

32142. The steamers from Drogheda direct are railway companies' steamers?—The Lancashire and Yorkshire steamers.

Oct. 21, 1907.

Mr W. Evelyn
184,
Representative
of the
Drogheda
Chair of
Commerce

The reason-
ableness of
the request
for through
rates from
Drogheda to
Bangor

The direct
steamers from
Drogheda
owned by the
Lancashire
and Yorkshire
Railway Co.

stations where, if a trunk line worked there, it would be well to alter the gauge—for instance, the County Clare railways. I have travelled over these, and I believe there would be a much better service if the Great Southern worked them with their own rolling stock, but the gauge is against that. There are other cases where there is no need whatever to change the gauge.

32150. Take that West Clare. If it was taken over by one large company, do you think it would be an advantage if the gauge was made the same as that of the working companies?—Yes, the five foot three inch gauge. Everybody knows that at these more important stations the main lines have got engines and rolling stock, and they could work an extension very much more cheaply than a separate company could. The main fact of the Irish railway question is simply this—that more than two-thirds of the whole mileage is owned by the three railways referred to in my memorandum. There are about 3,500 miles of railways in the country, and the Great Southern owns or works about a third of it.

32151. At any rate, I gather from what you said just now, that you did not object to State purchase of the baronial railways if they were handed over to the larger companies to work?—That is my view.

32152. You are against State purchase of the whole of the railway system?—I think it would be better to have three good strong companies competing in the country.

32153. Have you based that opinion on any knowledge you possess as to State-owned railways in other countries?—I have been studying it a good deal, I have travelled a little on the Continent, and I have been speaking a good deal to travellers, and they consider that the Great Northern of Ireland gives a very much better train service than is given on the State railways—say, in Italy, and the speed, for instance, is very much better than on the Belgian lines.

32154. Are you aware, in reference to Italy, that it is only within a recent period that the State has taken over the railway?—I know that.

32155. How long ago is it?—Less than two years ago.

32156. Mr. Ascroft.—In July, 1906.

32157. Chairman.—You are not speaking from personal knowledge?—Not on regards Italy. I have not been in Italy. I have been in France.

Rev. H.
O'Brien,
President of
St. Columba's
College,
Newry

Suggested
alteration
of the light
railways from
narrow to
broad gauge.

Suggested
nationalisation
of State pur-
chase to the
baronial
railways.

The three
trunk lines to
be left as
competing
commercial
concerns.

The Great
Northern of
Ireland Co.,
provides better
train service
than many
Continental
railways

Oct. 21, 1901.

Rev. Dr.
O'Reilly,
President of
St. Columba's
College,
Nenagh.

Low import
rates for
goods not
produced
in Ireland
recommended.

Proposed
abolition of
duties to
prevent
imports
competing
with
Irish
products
at unduly
low
rates.

Low export
rates for
Irish
products
to English
markets to
meet foreign
competition
suggested.

The provision
of some cheap
tribunal to
replace the
Railway and
Canal Com-
mission
Court.

Further
railway en-
largement
Irish resources
inexhaustible.

32137. Have you read or heard the evidence given before this Commission in reference to rates?—Yes, sir, I have.

32138. You have read it?—I have read it.

32139. Do you agree generally with the witnesses that the local rates in their judgment are too high for the proper development of the traffic?—There is one thing I think I do not altogether agree as regards cheap through import rates, that it would be a good thing to abolish them. I have read what some of the witnesses said about Scottish railways not having through rates for certain things. I think that in the case of goods that we cannot or do not produce in Ireland, a cheap through import rate into this country is an advantage to the Irish consumer.

32140. Just take that case. Were you in the room when the last witness was examined?—Yes.

32141. Take that very case. You think that oatmeal, which is the industry of the gentleman who was the witness, you think that a cheap through rate ought to be in operation for oatmeal into Ireland?—No. I say in that case where we are producing the article, or can produce it, we should not be exempted unfairly against by special cheap rates for foreign meal. But with regard to produce and articles of consumption that we cannot produce in Ireland, I think that a cheap rate on these goods coming into the country is an advantage to Irishmen.

32142. *Chairman.*—Take oatmeal. You think it would be an advantage to the people of Ireland if they had cheap through rates for oatmeal from England?—Oatmeal is a thing that we produce. I do not want them to be able to compete unfairly against us.

32143. You stated agricultural products, you produce everything that is grown, almost, in Ireland?—I must not have made myself clear, what I said was that in the case of those articles that we do not produce ourselves in Ireland, it is an advantage to get them in cheaply, on the other hand those things that we do produce ourselves wherever it can be shown that the through rates from England have been unfair to the Irish producer I think the Imperial Parliament should see to that and try to remedy it.

32144. Stop a moment, let us follow this—that the Imperial Parliament should apply a remedy?—Should go into the question, and devise a remedy.

32145. How can they supply a remedy unless they owned the railways?—The question of railway rates has been gone into before. I think this is a matter that affects agriculturists in England, too.

32146. I do not quite follow, Father O'Reilly, the line that you have taken up at the moment. Just tell me if I am right. You say that anything imported into Ireland that cannot be produced in Ireland should be carried at a low rate to the benefit of Ireland?—I should not object to the present cheap rate on those things.

32147. What about the export rates from Ireland for what the land will produce. Do you agree that they should be lower than these import rates. Take cattle—take anything, butter, eggs, and all these things. Do you think it would be to the advantage of this country—we are in Ireland—if there were low rates for the export traffic to England?—I think we should get as low rate as would enable us to compete in England with foreign countries, but not bring a trader, of course I cannot give a professional opinion upon those matters. I have seen some people write about this, as if all the cheap rates into the country were an injury to the country, and I do not believe that.

32148. You believe they are an advantage to the country where they do not compete?—With existing Irish industries.

32149. Very well. Have you considered the question of a tribunal in Dublin to settle disputes between the public and the railways?—I believe that in case of disputes between the companies and traders, we should have some cheaper way of getting cases settled.

32150. Cheaper than the present Railway Commission Court?—Although there are ways of getting things settled at present, traders will all tell you they do not know how to go about it, and they are afraid of the expense. I think if there were a Court in Dublin these things could be more easily settled.

32151. How would you deal with those districts that have no railway accommodation at present. Do you think that private enterprise will ever provide

those railways?—I really do not think that Ireland will pay for very much more railway extension. I believe these should be more motor traction. I believe that districts might pay for motor traction that could not pay for railways.

32152. Very well. Who should work the motors—private enterprise or a railway company?—I think the railway companies.

32153. They should be compelled to provide the motor service in districts where they have no railway accommodation?—Suppose the State would hand over these guaranteed lines to the railway company. I think in consideration of getting these lines the State should make a condition that they would give certain facilities in the way of motors.

32154. Although the railway companies might say that taking over the lines was a loss to them?—I do not believe they would be at a loss. They could work them very much more cheaply than the separate companies do at present.

Examined by LORD FINLAY

32155. Why have you made up your mind that three railways in Ireland would be more beneficial than the present system?—The fact is that at the present time they own two-thirds of the mileage of the country, and I think they could very well work the whole of it.

32156. You believe they would work it more economically than the present large number of Boards and staffs?—Yes.

32157. And that they would be able to buy their supplies and what they require cheaper than they do at present, and therefore the saving would go to the reduction of rates?—Yes.

32158. That is why you go for the three?—Yes.

32159. If the three railway companies would be very much better than the present large number of small lines, why would it not be better still to have one entire system; would not they be able to buy all their goods and arrange their train service with one staff instead of three?—That is just where the question comes in of State ownership.

32160. I am not asking about State ownership, I have kept to your own words, that you believe three lines would be better than the present system, and you quite truly say, and I agree, that it would be much more economical than the present system. Having got so far, let us think of it a little more. Take the whole of Ireland. You say you heard the evidence of Mr. Hill, who preceded you. He is in Drogheda, and he wants to send goods to Cork or Limerick or Tipperary. On your proposed three railways he would have to make through traffic arrangements with the line he is on to go to the next line; would it not be much simpler and more economical if it was all the one system?—The country likes competition.

32161. Where does the competition come in if from Dublin all goods belong to the Great Southern—where would the competition be?—The two companies are in alliance, more or less, with different English companies.

32162. I want to see what has passed through your mind, why you arrived at the three companies. Although I myself gave evidence in that very direction before the Allports Commission and advocated it at the time, I want to see why you arrived at three instead of one?—A thing passing through my mind really was this, that these three trunk lines carry more or less different traffic. The Great Northern line, on the whole, is at present developing the East India and other industries in the North. I fully well I quite admit there are complaints—there always will be complaints, I suppose—the Midland Great Western line, on the other hand, carries cattle principally, and there are more or less different industries connected with those lines. There is an idea amongst gentlemen in trade that I have been speaking to, that it would be much better if these two lines remained separate from each other and from the Great Southern and Western.

32163. That is not in accordance with the statement of some of the witnesses here that about seventy per cent. of the traffic goes from Belfast away to Sligo, and even down to Galway, and that they send of groceries, and things of that sort, largely from Belfast to this district?—I know that is quite true. I know, as a matter of fact, that traffic goes from Newry to Sligo; but I am speaking generally

Oct. 22, 1907.

Rev. M.
O'Reilly,
President of
St. Colman's
College,
Newry.

The same
system which
three systems
would effect
for judging
the efficiency
of these
working as
affecting the
develop-
ment of the
country
suggested
as a good
reason for
their adop-
tion.

Public opinion
and to be
unconscious
for reduced
rates, but
divided re-
specting State
purchase.

The difficulty
is deciding
in any extent
of organiza-
tion with
unorganiza-
tion.

A motor
service better
than a bad
railway.

Irish light
railways, with
few excep-
tions, save
working
expenses.

32154. In that case, would not one system for the whole country be much more economical and much more convenient to the traders of Ireland?—I don't see that—that it could be brought about at all under a State system of railways.

32155. But I did not ask you that question. I only wanted to know whether you saw any disadvantage in having one system, provided it could, in some way or other, be arranged, without State purchase, which you were to object to. You admit that it would be cheaper to work three railways than as at present?—I think if you got the length of having three railways it would be all right.

32156. But you don't say it is possible?—I do not think that we could get all lines into one system even if it were desirable, and we want to get something.

32157. I will leave it there. Now, do you propose to hand over free to the railway companies these small lines?—I think that that would be the best thing for the Treasury to do.

32158. You want to get money from the British Government?—About a million of money would do the whole thing.

32159. And you want to get that million of money to lay the small lines, and hand them over to the big lines at the present moment?—Yes. And part of the bargain should be that the companies getting these lines should put on certain motor services.

32160. As feeders to the main line, for the convenience of the public?—Yes.

32161. Is that what you want?—That is my idea.

32162. As you live in the district, do you look upon the County Down line, which runs through your district, as one of the small lines?—No. As a matter of fact, I never mentioned that line. It is a very good line.

32163. You say that?—Yes; three main trunk lines. And I believe that that line is all right. I believe the County Down line will amalgamate voluntarily with the Great Northern later on.

32164. But it is not a line that you would make a present of to the Great Northern?—Decidedly not. The lines I speak of were the guaranteed lines, light railways.

32165. But still that is one of the lines that happens to come in, and must go to one of the trunk lines?—That involves an arrangement between the companies, and, as a matter of fact, I believe the whole thing that prevents Irish railways for the last twenty years from amalgamating is the question of terms.

32166. But do you think that for the convenience of trade in the County Down it should be taken over by the Great Northern?—I think it should. I am not in any great hurry. It is a good line.

32167. I only want to be clear as to what you meant in your evidence to the Chairman, who did not seem to quite understand your evidence, and neither did I. You would reduce the rates for imports when Ireland cannot or does not manufacture that particular article. You would take them as cheap as you could possibly get them. That is what you meant to convey?—Yes.

32168. Take the question of butter. We know that four months out of the year Ireland does not produce as much butter as would give us all we require. Would you reduce the import rate for four months of the year and then go up again as soon as we have got a supply?—That could not be done.

32169. No; but you did not mean that?—I did not mean that. The whole thing is that I think there should be a proportion between import and export rates that would be something like fair; that with regard to those things that we are producing ourselves Ireland should not be at any disadvantage in the English market.

32170. You are aware that in the winter season, in the months of December, January and February, we import a large quantity of butter?—As a matter of fact we import any amount of butter in Newry.

32171. You do?—There is any amount of Danish butter sold in Newry.

Examined by Mr. ACONWAY.

32182. Just a word about those three companies. I understand you want to keep what you call competition alive to some extent?—Yes.

32183. You want to keep different systems in competition. Let us call it a comparison even perhaps more than competition?—Yes.

32184. If you had one system, whether it was a State or a private system, you would have nothing to compare with anything?—No.

32185. Under your system of three it might be obvious that A or B or C company was developing its district?—Yes.

32186. And then you would ask why are not the other two doing the same?—Yes.

32187. And there would be a standard of comparison even if there was not competition?—Yes.

32188. Is that practically the way you put it?—Yes.

32189. That is what I rather thought was your view?—That is my view.

32190. You state in your proof, though I do not think you mentioned it here, that the time for State ownership has not arrived, or that it would be premature, or some phrase of that kind?—I do not think public opinion is made up on the question. I may tell you I believe that public opinion is made up on this, that there should be some change in rates, and, though some people seem to imagine that State purchase is necessary to do that, I do not think it is. Many people paying largely for railway rates have told me the same. A man paying about £3,000 a year in railway rates told me he would be very hostile to a State system.

32191. And your view is that public opinion would be nearly unanimous, as far as public opinion ever is unanimous, in favour of a further development, but not of going the whole way?—Yes, that is my impression.

32192. Now about the guaranteed railways. I can quite understand in the case of a railway that, roughly speaking, is paying its working expenses and no more, under separate management, that if a big railway took it there would be a considerable saving in working expenses?—Yes.

32193. As it would need no general manager and no secretary, and so on?—Yes.

32194. Probably the big railway might develop the traffic and get better receipts?—Yes.

32195. It would be a good bargain for the big railway company to get it for nothing?—It would.

32196. On the other hand, you think it would be a good bargain for the State to hand it over gratis; it would pay the State to do a liberal turn to the company?—Yes, and it would be a great matter for the unfortunate ratepayers.

32197. What I want you to tell me is, what would happen in a case like that of the Tinslagh and Courtmacsherry line that came before us, where the gross receipts were not half enough to pay the working expenses. I suppose the railway company would not be very anxious to take that even free gratis and for nothing?—That is so.

32198. Have you ever thought how that point can be dealt with? The railway company would be rather in a strong position to say to the State, "We won't work it unless you give us a very heavy payment."—A good deal would depend upon the company that would take it. If it could be easily worked as an extension. Is it a branch of the present Cork and Brandon?

32199. Yes. It is a branch of a branch if I remember aright. It is a branch off a line, the name of which I do not remember accurately, Tinslagh and something.

32200. Mr. Series.—Ballinacorney.

32201. Lord Pirrie.—Would it not be better to put on a motor service than take over a bad line?—Yes. In fact some of these extensions were not needed. A motor service would have been sufficient. As a matter of fact, the motor services in some cases did not pay either.

32202. Mr. Aconway.—I am afraid they did not. What I wanted really to get at was this. Have you thought out the thing in detail enough to be able to suggest how you ought to get a big railway company to take over a little railway that would be a bad bargain, even for nothing?—Well, I looked up practically all the light railways, at least the most considerable ones, the Ovens and Lustrim and the Clagher Valley, and found that in most cases they earned working expenses, and in some cases a little more.

32203. They would be a good enough bargain for nothing?—They would at their worst make an approach towards paying the working expenses at all costs. The only light railway of the kind that

Oct. 21, 1907.

Rev. M.
O'Reilly,
President of
St. Colman's
College,
Newry.

Proposed
transfer of
the Clough
Valley line
and the ex-
tension from
Tynan to
Newry
when made
to the Great
Northern
Company.

Suggested
consolidation
of the Rail-
road (Northern
County Com-
mittee) Rail-
way from
analogous
line.

The New-
castle exten-
sion should
be merged in
the Great
Northern
system.

History of
the promotion
of the New-
castle
extension.

Rivalry
between the
Great
Northern
and County
Down Com-
panies.

Subsequent
agreement
and consoli-
dation by both
of separate
actions.

would fall into the area of the Great Northern would be the Clough Valley.

32203. That would be a good bargain at nothing?—I believe that it would be an advantage to have it taken over, seeing that it is proposed at the present time to extend that line to Newry, and the Treasury has offered a grant. I believe there is a balance of the money still to be found, and there is some difficulty about it. If the Great Northern got the Clough Valley they should make this extension.

32204. I will ask you a question on your last point, that extension to Newry. I dare say you are aware there was a project at one time, but I think it fell through, that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company should put money into it?—Yes.

32205. We have had some evidence that some people were in favour of getting the English company's subscription, and some against it. I did not gather that Newry would have objected to the Lancashire and Yorkshire putting money into it?—Indeed they would be very glad to get money from any source.

32206. Do you see any objection?—I see no objection.

32207. You are not afraid that it would put the Irish system, as it were, in bondage to the English?—I do not think so. I think in the North we are very well able to hold our own. I do not think it would do us any harm. I should imagine, however, with regard to the Northern Counties system belonging to the Midland of England, that the people would prefer to let that stand as it is. I think that line must remain outside amalgamation.

32208. You think that the Northern Counties system ought to belong to the Midland Company?—Well, I think as the majority of the people say that it is a very good line it should be left as it stands.

32209. You spoke in your evidence of the Newcastle extension?—I think that extension should be acquired by the Great Northern.

32210. That is a little extension of the County Down, but the Great Northern trains run right into Newcastle?—Yes.

32211. That apparently is worked in two hands, with a junction at Castlewellan?—Yes, I know a good deal about that. The Great Northern has running powers into Newcastle, and, as a matter of fact, runs all passenger trains into Newcastle. It has no difficulty whatever.

32212. All the passenger trains run through from the Great Northern?—Yes. The County Down also runs passenger trains from Newcastle up to Castlewellan.

32213. Lord Pirbright—Not further?—Not further, because they do not own further. The Great Northern owns Castlewellan.

32214. Mr. Ascroft.—Is the service managed satisfactorily to the public?—Yes.

32215. We have heard a good deal about blocks at junctions, where two railways disagree. There is a case of the harmonious use of a junction?—Yes.

32216. Mr. Serles.—It is exceptional?—It is only a matter of a few minutes run from Castlewellan to Newcastle.

32217. Mr. Ascroft.—Mr. Serles says it is exceptional. Can you tell us how that extension was made?—There was a local committee formed to work the thing up, and they spent a good deal of money in publicitary expenses, endeavouring to get the Government to give a grant. Well it was understood at first that there would be a small grant given, with a view to developing the fisheries along the coast as well as some mineral deposits in the district that might be traversed by the line. However, the Government gave nothing, and Earl Annesley came to the rescue. He agreed to give the interest in his land, with the exception of his township land, for nothing, and the Great Northern Company communicated with the committee that they would expect the tenants to do something. The committee interviewed the tenants, and the tenants agreed not to traverse the award of the arbitrator, and to put the company to no legal costs whatsoever, and, when the tenants agreed to this, the Great Northern promoted a Bill for the purpose of this extension. The Bill. The reason of the County Down's opposition was that they were getting nearly all the Castlewellan traffic in Newcastle, and the Great Northern scheme was to construct a separate station from the

County Down at Newcastle, with, of course, a junction for goods. The County Down people demanded that the Great Northern should use their station, and the Great Northern said that they were not going to make a line to accommodate the County Down traffic for nothing, but, finally, a compromise was made, that the County Down would make the four English miles into Castlewellan, and the Great Northern would give them running powers on their line as far as Rallymore, whilst the Great Northern should have running powers into Newcastle.

32218. And the result was that the line was made, and the two railway companies are able harmoniously to use the line without any Government grant?—Yes.

32219. How long did it take to make that?—It took us three years; in 1900 the Bill was passed.

32220. An unopposed Bill at the end?—An unopposed Bill at the end.

Examined by Mr. Serles.

32221. You look at this question, not from any particular point of view, but from that of the general interest of the country?—Yes.

32222. Now, just to touch upon through rates and local rates, you say that the whole system of local rates should be simplified, and that through rates from places outside of Ireland, which are clearly and manifestly prejudicial to local interests, should be abolished. That is what you said?—Yes.

32223. I feel no difficulty in understanding your position. You say that when a through rate into Ireland is an raw material, or on something that, as you say, could not be made in Ireland, a low import rate is an advantage?—Yes. Take wheat. We grow comparatively little wheat in Ireland, and a low import rate on foreign wheat would, I think, be a considerable advantage to Ireland, for the milling industry in the country.

32224. So, when there is a low import rate on goods, even if manufactured, that are not manufactured, and could not be manufactured in Ireland, the low import rate keeps down the price to the consumer?—Yes; and is an advantage, therefore, to the nation.

32225. But where through import rates prejudice local interests you would, you say, abolish—do you say "abolish" or revise them?—Revise would be more correct.

32226. You bear in mind, no doubt, that if you abolish any through rate, or raise any through rate, you will raise the price of something or other to some consumer?—Yes.

32227. Well, then, would it not be better, instead of revising the low through import rates, to revise the inland rates, so that, without raising the price to the consumer in Ireland, the Irish manufacturer might yet be able to compete with the importer. That is what you mean by simplification of local rates?—No. What I mean by simplification of local rates is that some people believe that it is so very hard to understand what is the maximum rate for a certain distance, and so on.

32228. But, of course, when you say that the import rates should be revised when they prejudice local industries, what you mean is, when the inland rates affecting local industries are higher?—Yes.

32229. Would it not be better to equalise matters, not by revising through rates so as to raise the price of goods to consumers, but by reducing the inland rates so that the local manufacturer may be able to stand on an equal footing with the importer who has a low through rate?—I think the importer who gets too low a rate. I think the whole difficulty is this, that the importer has got too low an import rate, and if the local rate and import rate were brought more into harmony they would be more workable.

32230. Exactly; that instead of raising the through rate you think the better way would be to lower the inland rate, so that the home manufacturer might transport his goods to markets in Ireland on a more equal footing with the importer, who has now the unfair advantage of a low through rate?—My idea is simply this, that the local rates are believed to be a little too high, and, on the other hand, some of these through rates are unduly low.

32322. The import rates?—The import rates are unduly low.

32323. The point I am putting is this, whether it would be better to amend by raising the import rate, with the consequence of raising the price to the consumer, or whether it would be better to amend by lowering the inland rate so that the home manufacturer might compete in price with the importer?—Within certain limits. I understand the principle of the question very well, but, as I say, I am not at all an expert on the matter of rates; but I can see this much clearly enough that all the evidence seems to point to the fact that there are some things coming in at rates that cannot possibly pay.

32324. But if the through rate is lower than the inland rate, then would it not be better to lower the inland rate to the level of the through rate, rather than to raise the through rate to the level of the other, so that the consumer who has to buy the goods may not be prejudiced?—I prefer to put it in this way, that the two should be brought more into harmony; if necessary, perhaps the inland lowered a little and the other raised a little.

32325. If you raise the through rate you raise the price of the goods. If you lower the inland rate you enable the home manufacturer to compete with the importer without raising the price of the goods. Which is the best?—It would be better to reduce the inland rate. This is not to be taken as an contradiction of my previously expressed opinion in favour of raising rates. Theoretically, if inland rates were as low as the present import rates, it might seem attractive, but the thing is, I believe, impracticable, as no Irish railway line could then pay anything like their present modest return on capital invested. Besides, the British consumer can't have it both ways.

32326. Now, should you say that the worst symptom of the unhappy economic state of Ireland is the persistent congestion?—That is really what is making a great deal of the difficulty.

32327. It is the most challenging symptom, is it not, of the economic state of Ireland?—Yes.

32328. You know the case as stated—that our exporters have to pay high rates upon their exports to Great Britain, and that imports to Great Britain from abroad are brought at rates so much lower than the food imports to Great Britain from abroad have rarely developed, occupying the ground which Ireland might have had upon a fair rate system?—I believe that a great deal more could be done for the country by reorganisation, and by paying more attention to the quality of our products. I know, as a matter of fact, that better, for instance, sent into our markets is not suitable often in the very towns where it is sent, because small farmers have not got the proper appliances, and the proper horse accommodation, for dairies and so forth, and I believe that a great deal of the imported goods come in for that very cause.

32329. These matters, in Ireland, have been much improved. I return to the point. If the rates on exports from Ireland to Great Britain are substantially higher than those on exports from countries abroad to Great Britain on the same products, the effect would be, as we have seen, an immense development of imports from abroad, and a reduction of exports from Ireland. That would be the natural result under such unequal systems of rates, of competition over a series of years?—That is so.

32330. Now, then, as to Irish manufactures, just for a moment. The evidence is that the system of low through rates does flood this country with imported goods to the value of between fifty and sixty millions a year, whilst the Irish manufacturer, by reason of high inland rates, finds it difficult to sell his goods even in Irish markets not remote from his factory. That would, of course, tend to suppress or diminish Irish manufactures?—Yes.

32331. Now, if we find the agricultural output of Ireland in that way limited, and the manufactures of Ireland in that way suppressed for a long series of years together, does that, go far, in your opinion, to account for the persistent congestion? Taking the two together, the restriction of the agricultural output and the limitation of the home manufactures, limiting, in the first place, the employment of the agricultural people, and limiting, secondly, the employment for the surplus population, which the agricul-

tural districts throw off in every generation, must not persistent congestion be the necessary consequence?—The chief industry I know anything about is the linen industry, and that, under existing conditions, is at present doing remarkably well, and there is any amount of employment; yet, I have been told by parish priests that even in those places where wages are better, and employment constant, congestion is still going on. They say that it is simply because nowadays people find it easy to go to America, and because there are such extraordinary wages in it, that a certain section will emigrate.

32332. Extraordinary wages and extraordinary expenses in America?—But if you go there for a few years you can make money. I know of places in the County Down where the emigration is still very great. If a man comes in for a few acres of land, and he finds it burdened with £70 or £80 of debt, he generally goes to America, and can easily save up the £70 or £80 after a couple of years' work, a thing which he could never have done at home.

32333. The Irish people are very fond of their country?—I think they are very fond of working.

32334. Very fond of home toil?—They are, after they have had a little travel first. I think they are far fonder of travelling than they used to be.

32335. Apart from that, is not it noticeable that all over Ireland, the limitation of the agricultural output, the want of work, does send the people away who, under other conditions, would go to organised industries in the towns, but we have no organised industries to afford employment to the agricultural surplus, and so congestion occurs? You would at least say that if there was an expansion of the agricultural output and a growth of manufactures, the congestion would be less? It would seem that in order to check this congestion, unparalleled as it is in the history of the world, we need a general revision of the export and inland rates?—I think the congestion is showing signs of abating.

32336. Well, I fail to see it in the statistics, so far.

32337. Lord Purvis.—Is it emigration you say is abating?—Emigration. I think it has touched bottom.

32338. Mr. Sturges.—No sign of that, Father Reilly. If, in order to set these things right, we need to revise the export rates, and to lower the inland rates, can that ever be effectually done from the outside, through the present railway companies? Look to the experience of fifty years, the efforts of the Board of Trade, the working of the Agricultural Department, the judgments of the Railway Commission. Do you find that all these together have made any impression on the railway system, or made less intense the acrimony of the public complaint?—I think during the last twenty years there has been a very great improvement on the main lines, on the three trunk lines.

32339. The rates have remained substantially the same?—The public have got greater facilities.

32340. I am not on that question at all. I am on the question whether the public authorities—executive, judicial, and administrative—have been able to make any impression on the system of railway rates from the outside. They have all remained substantially the same, and can you, Father O'Reilly, in the case of a system so complicated, so intricate, possessing such able officials, and such a high administrative organisation—can you ever really revise a system of rates that you yourself hold it to be necessary to revise, by attempting to operate from the outside. Can you reform the business, except by going in and taking it up?—I think you can.

32341. How?—Railways are monopolies, and regulated by the State, to a certain extent.

32342. But the State has exhausted itself by legislative, executive, and judicial efforts, to endeavour to accommodate the system of rates to the needs of the public, and those efforts have failed so far. Does not the failure of forty or fifty years suggest to you the need of some new departure?—Certainly; as I said myself, I feel that a step forward should be made, by taking over all these unremunerative lines.

32343. But as a reform is so much required in the system, would you agree that the reform to be put in force should be that which has been found in similar cases most effectual for the purpose. You could hardly dissent from that?—Certainly not.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Rev. H. O'Reilly, President of St. Columba's College, Nantyr.

Causes that contribute to persistent congestion from Ireland.

The limitation of agricultural output and the want of work.

The possibility of improving the condition of the railways to suit the needs of the country without abolishing private ownership.

The transfer of the unremunerative railways to the trunk lines a step in that direction.

On 21, 1907. 32253. Now you have three trunk lines, and you think there is some useful competition. Might I ask you, apart from the competition between sea and land carriage, is there any competition in rates? Does any company offer to do the same service for a lower price than another?—Travellers always believe that where you have competition you will have low rates.

The possibility of reducing privately owned lines to six by a scheme of voluntary amalgamation.

32254. There is no competition in rates. There is a competition, which I submit to you is wasteful—consuming for traffic and conveying traffic by roundabout routes, increasing expenses, and rendering it impossible to reduce the rates. Does not that system operate in the long run to the disadvantage of the public? I think instead of three trunk lines you would have really six. You would not compel the County Down line to amalgamate!—No.

32255. Do you think that the directors of that line would consent to perform the happy despatch on themselves?—I do not say so, but judging from what has taken place for the last ten or fifteen years in the amalgamating of the smaller lines, I believe it will be amalgamated.

32256. Self-preservation is the first law of railway boards, as of other institutions. Would the Northern Counties Committee consent to be swallowed up by the Great Northern?—I believe the majority of the people do not want amalgamation there.

32257. And would the South Eastern line consent to be absorbed by the Great Southern—their ancient enemy? You have six trunk lines instead of three?—Well, I mentioned those three main lines simply because they have light railways in their area.

The representation of six systems in the interests of the public feasible

32258. But there is a question more important than the light railways. If you leave three or six railway companies in existence, do you not leave in existence opportunities for wasteful competition about traffic and broken services at junctions, and those other difficulties of which the public complain; do you not still leave open the occasion for a continuance of those causes of complaint?—If you had only three large lines and three small ones, it would be very easy to watch them.

32259. I fail to see that you make out three. I think it is six, because you could not compel those other lines to commit suicide!—Certainly not.

32260. And then you would have six, would not you?—Yes, but it must be remembered that those three trunk lines I have spoken of throughout would have seven-eighths of the mileage of the country.

32261. But the relative uselessness of those three lines, the limitation of traffic on those lines, would not induce them to consent to be abolished; so that you could not, by your plan, bring the number under six, unless you compelled those three lines to amalgamate!—Certainly not. But these might be voluntary amalgamations later on.

The allocation of the profits arising from economies effected by a reduction in the Irish railway companies.

32262. Then you have certainly six; but amalgamate down to six lines tomorrow, and, the rates remaining where they are, these low import rates and those high export rates, where is your step forward to deal with the problem that is pressing on people?—I believe that owing to the fact that the system would be worked more cheaply, the lines that would get those little footers would certainly have greater receipts.

32263. And would pay greater dividends?—No; I do not believe so.

32264. Why?—I believe the policy of our leading companies is not to increase the dividend beyond what it has been for the last ten years.

Improbability of the dividends being increased

32265. Remember that the average dividend on Irish railway capital is less than four per cent. at present. You would not expect the shareholders to stand by and see the increased profits being put to the reduction of rates (which might not bring in recompense for years) instead of to dividend?—I know that the Great Southern on many occasions have earned enough money to pay the shareholders seven per cent., and the directors never did it, but always spend it on improvement of the permanent way, &c.

Encouragement of local industries by the enterprises satisfied.

32266. They consider 6½ enough, and perhaps it is; but where you find the average dividend between three and four, would it be a safe thing for the public to amalgamate lines on the assumption that if there was increased profits those increased profits would go in reduction of rates. Could you rely upon it, with the assurance necessary for a feeling of security?—I think that those large railway companies

for their own preservation would encourage local industries. Shareholders after all see that if the case is not improved they cannot get their dividends.

32267. Shareholders consider that their interest is most concerned with large dividends. In commercial enterprises private profit is the object; and do you really expect railway companies to act in a manner different from any other commercial undertaking and hold altogether views?—Certainly not; but at the same time I believe that if any railway company, or any other company, adopts too much a policy, it cannot succeed.

32268. That, even from the merely practical point of view, is absolutely true; but how usually men in general fail to preserve it?—It is perfectly true.

32269. When you show up your memorandum some time ago, I apprehend that the form of State purchase to which you referred was that by the Imperial Government?—Yes.

32270. If the Imperial Government bought the lines and committed them, as they necessarily would, to the care of any Imperial Department, controlled by the London Treasury, would you in that case apprehend that the increased profits derived from the coasted working, once paid into the British Exchequer, might never become available to Ireland?—Most probably they would; but, at all events I have a great distrust of any mere boards.

32271. A needy Chancellor of the Exchequer might say that the Imperial State, being the purchaser, was *vis à vis* entitled to the profits, and then he might whistle for our reduction of rates. Would that be a possible result?—It would.

32272. Now, looking to all that you have said about emigration, about the effect of high export rates, and the effect of low import rates; if you saw a fair prospect that the acquisition of these lines by Ireland, upon whatever financial arrangement might be found most convenient, and the working of them by a representative body, subject to the opinion of the Irish people, would produce such a revision of rates as would put this country into a sounder economic state, and develop agriculture and make manufactures thrive, should you be in favour of such a system, not as a step forward, but as a final solution of a question that is urgently pressing for final settlement?—My idea is simply this. I don't like to touch politics.

32273. No, let us keep off politics!—But the idea in my mind simply is this, that if Ireland had a Legislature of her own and an Executive of her own, and all that, and if they in their wisdom said, "We will buy the railways and take them over," there might be some guarantee that the thing would be run in the interests of Ireland. Under existing conditions, I do not think there would be.

32274. But suppose by the Imperial Parliament an authority was created?—What power would this authority have?

32275. This authority would have power to borrow and power to rate, perhaps. It would be a representative authority. It would be such an authority that, being representative, the people of Ireland would have power from time to time to take care that the interests of the country were being served by the representative body. Do you consider that such a solution of this transit question would prove as effectual in Ireland as it has proved in many other countries. Would you deny to the people of Ireland the chance of so great a reform simply because a greater reform cannot at present be obtained?—I did not say that. As I said before, if there was a Legislature in Ireland and an Executive, and so on, like what was contemplated under the Home Rule scheme, and if that body in its wisdom considered that it could work the Irish railways better itself, after compensating the shareholders, that would be one thing; but I could not approve of the Imperial Parliament taking over the Irish railways.

32276. I am not thinking of the Imperial Parliament taking them over. You have agreed that the Imperial Government would not be a fit machinery; but if finances were provided by Treasury loan to Ireland, or by Irish loan, or by grant as an offset against over-tariffing, and that an Irish body, responsible to the people of Ireland, would be thereby provided with adequate resources, would you deny the Irish people the realisation of that reform simply

because they might have to wait a longer time for a native Legislature; or would you allow them to have the railway reform when they could get it and the Legislature afterwards, when possible? Everything depends on the nature of the body.

32297 If the body was a fairly representative

body, would that content you?—It would, if it were provided with resources such as you have alluded to. I believe in better State regulation of railways; but I have strong objections to State ownership, on economic and political grounds, in this country under existing conditions.

Oct 31, 1907.
Rev. H.
O'Reilly,
President of
St. Columba's
College,
Newry.

The acquisition of the railways and their control by an Irish Statutory Body endowed with large powers and ample resources approved.

Mr. Patrick McLaughlin, Skirt manufacturer, Omagh, Representative of the Omagh Board of Guardians.

Complaints as to excessive rates for shirts.

Belfast and Omagh mentioned.

Mr. PATRICK M'CLOUGHLIN

32298 You are a skirt manufacturer?—Yes.

32299 What place?—Omagh, County Tyrone.

32300 And are you a member of the Board of Guardians of Omagh?—Yes.

32301 And are you also a member of the Omagh Rural District Council?—No, sir; Guardians are not members of the Rural District Council. Omagh is an Urban District, and the Guardians are merely Guardians. They are not District Councillors. There are two bodies.

32302 Then you speak on behalf of the Board of Guardians?—Yes, sir.

32303 And also of the Rural District Council?—Oh, yes, of course both are the same, but the Guardians are appointed by the Urban District, and they have only Boards of Guardians.

32304 At any rate, you are appointed by that body, whatever it is, to give evidence before this Commission?—Yes, sir.

32305 Now, what is the extent of the authority of these Guardians in the County of Tyrone?—We represent the whole of the Parliamentary division of Mid-Tyrone and portion of South and North Tyrone. The population represented is 80,000, and the valuation £120,000.

32306 What particular trades in the district do you wish to represent before us?—Shirts and underclothing manufacturing are the industries principally.

32307 Now, what particular district are those manufactured in?—In the counties of Derry, Tyrone, and Donegal.

32308 Is that particular district well supplied with railways?—No, sir, there is a large portion of the Counties of Tyrone and Derry where there are no railway facilities whatever in a district of pretty well 400 square miles. It is practically a circle, with a creek line of eight miles and another of twelve, going towards the centre of the circle.

32309 What railways are those?—Well, there is the Midland of England, that has one small branch going into the centre of the circle, about twelve miles from Lisnavey to Dangan.

32310 What is the other line?—I think the other is the Midland also. It runs into Dungannon.

32311 Where do you suggest, in that particular area, a central railway is needed?—A central railway is needed from the junction on the light railway from Strabane to Londonderry, at Donaghmore station, right from that to Donaghmore town, and from Donaghmore to Phenixbridge, and from Phenixbridge to Gortin, and from Gortin to Greenisland, and finally to Cookstown.

32312 That is from Derry?—From the junction, that would be half way between Derry and Strabane.

32313 Now, do you know what the length of that particular branch would be, about?—It would be about I should say fifty miles from the junction to Cookstown.

32314 And that has been put before us by previous witnesses?—Not exactly the same. They are recommending Strabane.

32315 The same general recommendation, but you propose to start at a different place?—Yes.

32316 This line which you suggest to Cookstown, serving the places which you have named, do you think that that would assist in developing any industry there?—It would largely assist in developing the industry that I represent, of shirts and underclothing manufacture. And I should say the people whom I represent desire also a branch from Gortin to Omagh, so that it would be joined with the capital town of the county.

32317 Am I right in saying that females are principally employed in your industry?—Mainly.

32318 And is that an agricultural county also, or a barren county?—No; Tyrone is a good agricultural

country.

32319 But the district referred to, viz., the 400 square miles, I would say should be made a completed district—a very poor district.

32320 Now, so much for the projected line which you think would be a great advantage, but what about the existing accommodation—what complaints have you with respect to the existing accommodation?—We think that the passenger charges and freights are much too high.

32321 Just, first of all, about your own industry—shirts. Tell us why you think the rates are too high, and besides in some measure the development of that trade?—Well, the freight from Belfast to Omagh on heavy shirrings is 2½d. 4d. a ton, and I find in practice that that rate amounts to a charge of 9d. per dozen shirts, working now shirts.

32322 Mr. Section.—How many miles?—Sixty-two miles. For a dozen shirts for which we are paid 2s. 3d., that is for the manufacture, for the making up, the Belfast portion, 2s. 3d. per dozen, the carriage of this heavy class of goods to and from Belfast is 9d. out of the 2s. 3d. That is, it will leave us only 1s. 6d. to pay the workers.

32323 Mr. Section.—Who pays the 9d.?—The manufacturer.

32324 Does it come out of what should be given to the workers?—Out of what should be given to the workers.

32325 Otherwise.—You mean that the carriage works out at 9d. per dozen shirts?—Yes; that is including the carriage both ways, to and from Belfast.

32326 How do you mean both ways?—The carriage would cost 4½d. coming to Omagh for a dozen shirts and 4½d. to go back to Belfast to the warehouse. I should explain that my business is rather more of a maker-up than of a direct manufacturer.

32327 Ah, I see. They are sent to you to make up?—Yes, from the warehouse. They send the materials to us in Omagh to make up, and we send them back to the warehouse in Belfast.

32328 I understand. You calculate that it is about 4½d. for a dozen shirts each way?—Each way. I am speaking of a heavy class of goods.

32329 Workmen's shirts?—Workmen's shirts.

32330 Heavy cotton?—Yes, heavy cotton.

32331 Now, then, the making-up of a dozen shirts you calculate costs about 2s. 9d.?—That would be if there was no railway carriage. That is what it would cost in the process of making up.

32332 Never mind the railway carriage. The making up charge is 2s. 3d. to 2s. 3d.

32333 Do you not say that the making-up charge is even a good deal less than that?—No, sir; but I would arrange with a Belfast house how much they would pay me for a dozen at Omagh. I would undertake for a price, say, 2s. 3d. per dozen. They would then arrange to send on a thousand dozens at that price.

32334 Then you calculate that it costs 2s. 3d., and in that you include the carriage.

32335 You include the carriage in the 2s. 3d.?—Yes.

32336 Now do you employ a large number of people in this class of work?—Yes; when I was making this class of goods there was a very large number of girls in the country, perhaps two or three hundred. I should explain the nature of the industry. We do not make them in our factory in Omagh. The system is the cottage class. I have described it that the goods are cut out in the factory and they are sent to the various cottages and the girls make them up and return them.

32337 At so much a dozen?—Yes.

32338 I understand that you supply threads and buttons and everything?—Yes.

32339 Now, is that industry still going on?—Well, the portion that I am now describing has ceased to exist for some years, as the carriage made it impossible.

The decline of the shirt industry mainly due to excessive transport charges.

On 21, 1887.

Mr. Patrick
McLaughlin,
Shirt manu-
facturer,
Omagh, re-
presentative of
the Omagh
Board of
Guardians.

The employ-
ment of
hundreds of
women and
girls in dis-
tricts where
shirt-making
formerly
flourished
ceased owing
to the effect
of excessive
railway
freights.

Inefficiency
of the railway
company to
compensate as
to excessive
shirt rates.

Derry once
the world's
centre for the
supply of
high-class
undercloth-
ing.

The demand
was in for
cheaper
shirts, etc.,
and able to
bear heavy
transport rates.

The repeated
freights the
railway
company
get out of
the shirt
industry.

32322. That is to say, you only got 1s. 6d. for doing the whole of the making up, and then the cost of 9d. for carriage preventing your continuing that?—That is exactly it.

32323. You could not go on at 1s. 6d. and had to stop?—Yes; in addition to carriage to Belfast, there was also carriage to the various country places.

32324. But you had not anything to do with that?—Oh, yes; we had to pay that as well.

32325. Now, just tell me. You say this was an industry which had an existence in your district, and that you yourself worked in it?—Yes.

32326. But it does not exist now?—No.

32327. And therefore the employment that was given to women and girls in that district has ceased?—Has ceased to exist.

32328. And you think that if the railway carriage had been more moderate you might have continued that industry?—There is no question about that.

32329. Of course, there must be an enormous quantity of these workmen's shirts made?—Oh, yes; that trade could be well carried on in almost any part of Ireland. There are millions of dozens of such a class as I have described made every year and worn by the workmen in the United Kingdom.

32330. There is an enormous quantity?—There is an enormous quantity.

32331. And you tell us that you could have done a considerable trade if you could have got some reduction in rates from the railway company?—Yes.

32332. Did you represent that to the company?—Certainly.

32333. And you did not get a reduction?—They paid no attention to it.

32334. Where are the other places where these shirts are made?—Chiefly Derry, Tyrone, and Donegal.

32335. The underclothing industries, where are they carried on—they are done principally in the North?—Principally in the North. Derry and Belfast are the great centres.

32336. You say principally in the North?—Well, chiefly. I should say chiefly in the North.

32337. Of course, they manufacture and send all over Ireland?—And all parts of the world. It is the manufacturing centre for the fine class of ladies' underclothing and shirts for the world. Now America is making a lot, but before that they were sending them to all parts of the world from Derry and Belfast. Derry chiefly is the centre for the shirt and underclothing manufacture, that is, the fine class, and these were sent to all countries in the world.

32338. Was there not something else operating in the markets to diminish that particular trade?—Yes. For the last five to ten years the class of goods has largely changed. Up to that it was nearly all very fine class of white goods—linen and cotton. Now coloured goods have come into use. These coloured goods are much heavier, and the prices for making up are only about half what was paid for white goods while the carriage was much higher. The smaller price for making up and the higher carriage will ultimately wipe out these industries in Belfast and Derry.

32339. The heavier industries will?—Yes.

32340. Now, is the making up of these particular shirts and underclothing done by piece-work?—Yes; they are practically all done by piece-work.

32341. You say, then, that goods sent to Irish factories require, before they reach the retail house, to pass over the Irish railways five times. How do you make that out?—Well, I do not mean always Irish railways, but, to pass over the railways English and Irish.

32342. You say Irish railways?—It is this way. I enter into an arrangement with a London or Belfast house to send goods to make up. They send them from the London house or Belfast to Omagh. They are sent out in the factory, and I should say that they are sent first to the Omagh factory. They are then sent out and sent to various stations, to the cottage industries, on Irish railways. They go out and come in again. That is three times—once from London or Belfast, once to the country districts, and then back again; and then, when made up, they are sent back to the London or Belfast warehouse, a fourth time; and, if an Irish retailer buys from the London warehouse, that is a fifth time.

32343. That is how you make up your five times?—Yes.

32344. That means British and Irish railways?—British and Irish.

32345. And therefore, as the railway companies get so many turns in the carriage of this one particular traffic—that is one reason why the rates should be lowered?—Yes.

32346. Are the great competitors principally in Scotland or England?—Mostly England and Scotland. The Derry industries are carried on mainly by English and Scotch firms. The factories are for supplying the London, Manchester and Glasgow warehouses. There are none of these goods sold direct from Derry. They are mostly sent to the factories in Derry to be manufactured, then sent to the warehouses in Manchester, Glasgow, and London.

32347. And the cheaper they can be made in Derry the more will be sent to you?—Just so.

32348. Now, does that small scale of rates for goods under 3 cwt. seriously affect this particular industry?—Very seriously, indeed.

32349. What do you suggest would be a fair reduction in that scale?—I mean a fair reasonable reduction, considering the circumstances of the trade in Ireland. I think, sir, it should be abolished altogether, and I hold a very strong opinion about the scale. I am of opinion that it amounts practically to fraud on the commercial public. The reason I say that is this, that no business man could go to the expense of keeping a clerk to check what we call the scale rate. It is an impossibility.

32350. Now, you are a practical man and a reasonable man. You do not suggest that when a railway company carry a ton of goods at 20s. a ton, goods of twelve pounds or twenty pounds or fifty pounds weight should be carried at that rate per ton?—Certainly not.

32351. You would have a minimum charge?—What I would suggest is that if they have to have a higher tonnage, let it be a rate that the commercial public will understand. I could understand a higher tonnage rate for anything from half a cwt. to one or two cwt., and putting it on the freight bill so that the public could check it. But I say it is absolutely impossible to check the scale rate.

32352. Now, what do you think about a suggestion that regarding 3 cwt. is a fair thing for England 2 cwt. would be a fair thing for Ireland?—I would abolish the scale rate altogether.

32353. You think 3 cwt. is too high?—There might be a high tonnage rate from a half cwt. up to 2 cwt.

32354. For under 3 cwt. there is a certain scale I suppose?—That is so. It is too high.

32355. After 3 cwt., so much a ton?—Not now, the scale that we have in Ireland goes higher than 3 cwt.

Mr. Fallow.—It is the same as in England, 3 cwt. to 10 cwt. practically amounts to 4 cwt. in Ireland.

32356. Lord Pirrie.—The rate is the same as in England, is it not?—Oh, yes. I cannot say.

32357. Mr. Acworth.—Is this scale of the Clearing House in force in Ireland?

Mr. Fallow.—Yes.

32358. Mr. Acworth.—It does not say it is, but says it is available in England and Scotland; but it does not say it is in use in Ireland.

Mr. Fallow.—It applies equally to Ireland, as shown in front of disambiguation.

32359. Chairmen.—Take a rate of 20s. per ton. Have you calculated what the tonnage rate would amount to as applied to the small scale?—I have, and taking a quarter of a cwt. it works out at 6s. per ton. (Paper handed to Chairmen by witness.)

32360. What does this show?—That the railway rates differ according to classification, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and shirkings come into Class 3. We find in some of these they charge them third class rate, but the great bulk of them they charged 5th. There is no way of checking them. You find they are over-charged 9s. or 10s. on their own shewing.

32361. Can you select one?—Yes. There you see one (referring to paper) overcharged 9s. That is charged 5th class, not 3rd, what it should be.

32362. I see this in 1901?—Yes.

32363. It is very odd?—Yes, because I have not been doing much business lately.

32364. Business has fallen off in consequence of these rates?—Yes.

32365. Lord Pirrie.—That is the Great Northern?—Yes.

32366. Chairman.—It is charged 5th class rate, and you say it should be 3rd?—Yes.

33366 And therefore overcharged 2d. 4.—Yes.

33366 Did you get the money back?—No.

33366 Why?—You would want to keep a special clerk to check rates. They change at these rates and the people don't know what they should pay, and you would want a special clerk.

33366 Mr. Denison.—He would have to be a very special clerk.

33367 Chairman.—Now, let us hear what you have got to say about through rates. Do you agree with the evidence that has been brought before us that the low through rates from England and Scotland into Ireland are injurious to the Irish manufacturer?—Well, in that way, yes, that is if they are competing against an Irish industry.

33368 I mean that?—In that case low through rates would be injurious, but there are some cases where they are advantageous, viz., when we have not got the raw material in Ireland. In that case it is a great advantage to have it at a low rate from England or Scotland.

33368 Take shirts, and see whether we cannot arrive at any conclusion from that. Take shirts?—That is a case in point. We do not manufacture the cotton in Ireland, and therefore it is an advantage to have a low rate for shirting, that is, the class of shirting that we do not make in Ireland. Of course there is very little shirting made in Ireland.

33370 That cloth is imported?—Imported.

33371 Now, what is the rate from London to Belfast for shirts?—42s. a ton, and I think it is a special rate. And for linen and cotton I understand that there is a special rate of 55s. That is, to Omagh, from London to Omagh.

33372 Shirts from London to Belfast, you say, are 42s. a ton?—Yes.

33373 That is a distance of 400 miles?—Yes.

33374 And your rate from Omagh to Belfast, 66 miles, you say is 55s. 4d. per ton?—Yes; that is correct.

33375 Now, what do you deduce from that—that the local inland rates in Ireland are far in excess of the through rates?—Certainly, if you pay 55s. 4d. for 66 miles and 42s. for 400. That, of course, operates against the Irish manufacturer.

33376 But of course there is a good deal of sea transit?—It comes by Gloucester, under 100 miles.

33377 Mr. Denison.—By Holyhead?—Holyhead and Greenore, I mean.

33378 Chairman.—You are not engaged in the export of agricultural traffic, are you?—No, sir.

33379 But as the representative of your Council or Board of Guardians, I suppose you have been asked to speak for it?—Yes.

33380 What have you to say about the egg rate?—The egg rate from Omagh to London is 56s. 4d.—from other parts of Ireland much higher. From Galway it is 94s.

33381 56s. 4d. from Omagh to London?

Mr. Tafford.—52s. 4d.—(Witness).—52s. 4d. company's risk; 58s. 4d. owner's risk.

33382 Chairman.—Do you remember what the rate is to Birmingham?—Kindly repeat.

33383 What is the rate, Omagh to Birmingham?—I have not the rate from Omagh to Birmingham.

33384 Mr. Denison.—We have it here in your proof.—Company's risk 60s., owner's risk 55s. 4d.—I have taken it from other sources to show up the difference in the rate of eggs from Denmark and from Belgium, and there the difference is something remarkable.

33385 Chairman.—Let us get this on the notes, if you do not mind. You have given us the rate of 94s. from Omagh to London, company's and owner's risk, and from Omagh to Birmingham you say the rates are company's risk, 60s., owner's risk 55s. 4d. And then the rate from Galway is 94s., and that again, I suppose, is company's risk?—Yes.

33386 You want to make some comparison between these rates and the rates for foreign eggs?—Yes.

33387 From countries in Europe, I suppose, to England?—Yes.

33388 Now, let us hear what evidence you wish to give on that point?—Well, what I am taking it from is a quotation from a pamphlet by Mr. William Cunningham, of Dunfermline, who deals with the nationalisation of the railways of England and Scotland, and directs attention to the very small rates for eggs from Russia and other places, which is very remarkable.

33389 They are remarkable, if the comparison is the same, but we have had that before us?—Yes.

33390 I do not think that would carry your case any further. For instance, you cannot tell us how far the eggs travel inland in Denmark to get to the port. These are the rates from the port?—No, I think from any part of Denmark.

33391 I know that is a mistake?—Well, the authority must be wrong.

33392 The authority is wrong if it says so. You do not know this of your own knowledge?—No.

33393 At any rate, we have got on record what the rates are from Ireland. Now, what about passenger fares?—Passenger fares are much too high, in my opinion and in the opinion of those whom I represent.

33394 I suppose you will agree that the ordinary fares are 1d. a mile for third class, and about 1½d. or 1½d. for second?—Yes, that is what is paid usually.

33395 Is your complaint about third or second class fares?—The bulk of the population go third class, it relates mainly to third class.

33396 There, again, you give a comparison with other countries?—Well, I feel strongly on that. I do not see why we should be added in this country with such excessive rates. In all the other countries the working man can travel for one-eight of a penny a mile.

33397 So they can in England?—The working men?

33398 There are incidental working men farms?—Well, we have not it in practice in the North.

33399 Have you not workmen's farms?—Yes, but not at an eighth of a penny a mile.

33400 I do not know about an eighth of a penny, but I know the fares are very cheap in England.

33401 Mr. Denison.—How much do workmen's fares take off the penny a mile in Ireland?—I am not aware that there are any facilities given to workmen. There may be a few places about Belfast.

33402 You always pay a penny a mile?—A penny a mile always, except for excursion or market tickets.

33403 Chairman.—Now, as to short distances. You say the fare here for twenty-four miles would be 2s. 1.—Yes.

33404 And have you got any figures to show what it is in the countries to which you refer?—I quote them from, of course, this same authority.

33405 That they can travel the same distance for half the money?—Yes, that is the ordinary fare, but then there are special fares for workmen on the Continent. They can travel eighteen miles out and in for a whole week for 1s. 4d. I have never seen anything of that sort in this country; that is twopenny and an eighth for eighteen miles. A lot of us would travel if we had such facilities.

33406 Now, in regard to facilities offered by the Great Northern for school children. We have had that before us on one or two occasions?—Yes; I have been asked to mention that. There is a grievance in connection with Omagh in that respect. The railway do not facilitate the children. In one particular direction the facilities are excellent; that is from Enniskillen to Omagh; but from Newtownstewart to Omagh they are not, and a child wishing to travel by railway to school in Omagh would have to go at eight in the morning, and would have either to do that or walk. Newtownstewart is ten miles from Omagh, and there is no station midway between those places. Then, on the other line, from Dungannon, there is no train that arrives in Omagh by which they could travel by till eleven o'clock in the day, when it is too late for school; and then they cannot leave till six in the evening.

33407 Now, is this a fancied grievance or a real grievance?—It is a real grievance.

33408 I thought Omagh was a place of importance. Has it not got schools?—Yes, excellent intermediate schools.

33409 But where do they want to go to from Omagh?—No; they want to come to Omagh.

33410 These children come into Omagh?—Certainly, for higher education.

Oct. 21, 1905.

Mr. Patrick W. Gough, Clerk, Mr. Denison, Omagh, representative of the Omagh Board of Guardians.

A considerable reduction in workmen's fares in Ireland suggested.

Facilities for school children.

Suggested cheaper fares and a more suitable train service to Omagh from outlying districts.

Oct 21, 1907.

Mr. Patrick J. Joseph, Short railway features, Oagh, re-promotional of the Oagh Road of Oagh Road.

Suggested issue of school children's tickets at cheap rates to the Continental route.

The restoration of the railway station at Meenaghy between Newcastle and Oagh target.

The issue of "excursion" tickets on fair days suggested.

More liberal issue to the extension of time in cheap return tickets desired.

Disagreement with previous witnesses as to the character of the Irish railway companies.

32411 From sparsely populated districts?—Yes.

32412 Do you think that many children can be sent in?—Yes, numbers of them. The intermediate schools in Oagh are very extensive.

32413 Mr. Stotes.—They do go, as it is, but they are not able to go by rail?—Yes, that is the grievance.

32414 Chairman.—And you think that in that case there ought to be cheap rates similar to what the rates are on the Continent?—Certainly, for children there ought to be very small prices charged.

32415 Lord Ffrench.—Then would you have the train to begin with?—They should offer cheaper fares first, and the train after. They charge 23 7s. 6d. for a half-yearly ticket from Newtownstewart to Oagh. That is far too much for a philosopher or a business man, if they have three children to send. It would be ruinous.

32416 Mr. Stotes.—It is about £30 a year for the three?—Yes.

32417 Chairman.—Then, I see you have got a complaint with reference to the distance of ten miles without a station at all?—Yes, sir, that is between Newtownstewart and Oagh. There was a station at Meenaghy, and there is a very strong feeling in Oagh about it. That was removed some years ago, and never replaced, and yet the country round it is rather a good class of country. The directors paid no attention whatever to the demand of the people. There have been public meetings held, and all to no effect.

32418 Has the district improved since the station was closed, or are the circumstances the same now as when the station was closed?—Well, I should say that the district has improved.

32419 But if the station would not pay the railway company to keep it open?—That raises the whole question—why should they not have a station to facilitate the public? Of course they cannot expect every station to pay.

32420 There is a space of ten miles without railway accommodation on that railway?—Yes.

32421 And there was a station which has been removed?—Yes.

32422 How long ago is it since that station was removed?—More than ten years.

32423 What have you to say about market tickets on fair days?—That is part of the irritating practice of the railway companies to issue cheap market tickets to small towns when it is a market day, but when it is a fair day the full fares are charged, and people cannot understand why there should be a difference between a fair day and a market day.

32424 That has been referred to several times. Your contention is that, if it is given on a market day it should be given on a fair day?—And then, again, the public are dissatisfied about the third class cheap fares. They have a return at single fare to Derry every Monday, and the public take advantage of it. It is a facility as far as it goes. But in practice it is irritating. I know in one case a respectable young man did not know that it was issued for only one day, and he travelled back the next day. He was prosecuted and fined. He paid 2s. 10d. for his return journey; while you can travel the same distance on the Continent for 8d., and they never prosecute you.

32425 He was prosecuted for breaking the regulations of the company. I suppose the condition was on the ticket that it was available for that day only?—I don't know.

32426 The ordinary return tickets are available for a period?—That spoils the advantage. The public have no belief on that sort of thing.

32427 But we must be reasonable. A market day ticket is for the day, is it not?—Yes.

32428 Then, if you did not get that ticket you would have to pay the ordinary fare?—But where is the injury to the railway company?

32429 That is the contention. Of course if those tickets were issued day after day, and return journeys allowed on any day they might look the people into their confidence. But if they be a great deal better for the railways. The majority of the people have a suspicion that they are running too much to the foreign interest.

32430 The last two witnesses in the room this morning gave the railways an excellent character?—I am very much obliged to agree with them.

32431 And it was the same company, the Great Northern, that they were dealing with?—I was referring to their treatment of third class passengers.

32432 Of course I can understand, on the question of rates and fares, that it would be a great advantage if you had them cheap, and had facilities.

Lord Ffrench.—We have had a great many complaints from witnesses with respect to the lack of facilities for school children.

32433 Chairman.—Now, what, in your opinion, would be the remedy for the state of things that you have endeavored to represent to us?—Well to put it into a nutshell, I am an advocate for the railways being controlled by an Irish authority—an elected authority. I mean to say I am also in favour of the nationalisation of the railways.

32434 You are in favour of it?—Yes.

32435 And now tell me, do you think that that is the opinion of the guardians generally in your district?—Yes, sir, a resolution was passed unanimously by a board of different political opinions.

32436 Of course those guardians are an elected body?—They are an elected body.

32437 And they unanimously agreed that, in their judgment, the remedy would be to place the railways in the hands of that authority?—An Irish authority.

32438 That the railways should be purchased by the State and worked by an Irish authority?—Quite so. It must be an Irish authority that should control the railways—not an English authority.

32439 You mean that an Irish authority should manage the railways?—Yes.

32440 In the interests of Ireland?—Yes.

32441 But, as to the question of the purchase, I suppose you are indifferent as to whether it is the British taxpayer or the Irish taxpayer?—We are all able to look after ourselves. We raise plenty of money.

32442 I suppose you would also agree with me that the great security of the British Government would enable it to be managed better—that the security would be better than that of an Irish authority?—Yes.

32443 You are in favour of nationalisation of the railways, to be managed, as one concern, by an Irish authority?—Yes, an elected Irish authority.

Examined by Mr. STOTES.

32444 You are strong and clear upon the principle that the control of the Irish railways, including the fixing of rates, should be in the hands of an elective Irish body?—Yes, that is so.

32445 You realise, no doubt, that if the State, that is, the Imperial or British State, purchased the lines they might claim to appropriate the profits?—There is no doubt of it.

32446 But it is only by the use of the profits that we could reduce the rates?—That is so.

32447 Therefore, would it not be essential that the elective Irish body managing the lines should have a right to dispose of the profits?—Undoubtedly.

32448 Then, if it could be arranged, would it set be a valuable, indeed an essential, part of the arrangement that the ownership of the lines should be vested in the Irish body which would control the rates?—Certainly.

32449 Otherwise there would be no necessary unity of direction. And I presume you are in favour of the view that an Act of Parliament should be passed for the Irish authority to purchase and deal with the railways, as otherwise a grouping or needy Imperial Minister, on the plea that the British Government had bought the lines, might abstract the profits for Imperial use?—Yes.

32450 And that would reduce the thing to a reality?—Yes.

32451 And in order that Ireland should have that practical control of the lines Ireland should undertake responsibility for finance?—Undoubtedly.

32452 Are you aware that according to the returns issued by the Department of Agriculture, while the exports of wearing apparel and drapery from Ireland were only £250,000 last year, the imports of wearing apparel and drapery into Ireland were worth over five millions sterling?—Well, I was not exactly aware of the figures, but I take it that that is the case.

32453 Well, contemplating and weighing figures of that kind, have you any doubt that if the system

of inland rates were made fair to Irish manufacturers, there might be a very great expansion in the production of such goods as those in Ireland, and of their sale in Ireland.—There is no doubt that a reduction of rates would immediately increase production in connection with all Irish manufactures.

32454. So that you think it is quite fanciful for any witness, especially one who has developed his own business by a reduction of rates, to come here and say it is too late to help or hope to develop Irish industries by that means?—Yes, I hold, from practical experience, that it is opportunity that is needed for developing industries in Ireland. I have been in England in connection with the industries I have spoken of. I learned the business in Derry, and I discovered afterwards that we could manufacture much cheaper in this country. Over twenty-five years ago the system of shirt-making in the South of England I carried back to Londonderry, and precisely revolutionised the trade there. We manufacture in Ireland much cheaper. Irish girls are prepared to take smaller wages, and they are well satisfied, for of course the cost of living is on a higher standard in England. Give us equal facilities and we can hold our own in any of the markets of England with the industry of which I am speaking.

32455. It is not too late, but still quite early enough, to lead up to that higher economic future which you hope for by proper transit arrangements?—Certainly.

Examined by Mr. AGNEW.

32456. You want a new railway from Derry to Coontown?—From half-way between Derry and Strabane, that is, the junction.

32457. From where is that?—It would be from what is called Donnamore, a place on the light railway from Derry to Strabane.

32458. And then, that would have to be a narrow gauge railway?—Yes, that would be the most suitable for the district.

32459. And when it got to Coontown it would meet your broad gauge railways?—Yes. The Great Northern and the Midland are broad gauge.

32460. Now, you know, I dare say, that the other day the Lanesvady to Dungannon, which is in the district, passed into the hands of the Midland Railway Company of England as part of the Northern Counties Railway?—Yes, I know that.

32461. Do you know what the Government got for it?—No.

32462. Take it from me that the Government handed it over for nothing—£2,000 for the whole line, or something of that kind, and the Northern Counties Railway said that they had got a bad bargain at the price?—That may be so.

32463. It looks as if a railway in that district could not be expected to pay?—Well, at first, probably, it would not pay.

32464. And as long as it does not pay, the cost of the capital would have to be borne, suppose your system was carried out, by the State railways of Ireland?—Yes.

32465. That is to say, other people would have to pay for it?—Well, we have strong views on that. I think it is the duty of the Government of the country to look to that, the same as it does elsewhere, and see that the railways were properly developed.

32466. And you agree with me that when the line would not pay it would have to be paid for out of the pockets of people who sent freight elsewhere?—Oh, no, but out of part of the Imperial funds that have been taken wrongly out of this country.

32467. And do you think all the new railways should be made that way that are wanted?—Well, there is plenty of money paid by Ireland to do justice of that sort.

32468. I will not argue that—it would be a long question. But, about another matter; you say your shirts cost £1s. 4d., a too from Belfast to Omagh?—Yes.

32469. And £1s. 4d. back again?—Yes.

32470. That is 8d. 8d. 1/2—Yes.

32471. Now, I have been working it out, and it worked on a great deal, and I find that if a dozen shirts cost 8d. the dozen shirts would weigh 40 lbs. I cannot think they would?—Oh, some of them more

than that. I am speaking of heavy workmen's shirts.

32472. Do you mean to tell me that any workman's shirt weighs 3½ lbs.?—Yes; the class I speak of weigh that. Heavy shirts.

32473. Why that is the weight of a coat?—That is just the grossest. They charge the same rate for that heavy shirt, £1s. 4d., as they do for linen. The heavy shirt costs 4½d. per yard; linen from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d.

32474. Do you really say that a working man's shirt weighs 3½ lbs.?—Yes.

32475. I think that is a mistake?—Oh, no, I have carefully gone into the figures.

32476. And you have weighed it?—Yes.

32477. Is it coarse cotton?—Heavy cotton, heavy quality.

32478. It would take fifteen or sixteen pence worth of cotton alone. Cotton is 6d. a pound?—It is made very weighty for the special purpose.

32479. What is it made of?—Pure cotton.

32480. What is it worth to sell?—Well, the wholesale price would be 4½d. to 5d. a yard.

32481. What is the finished shirt sold to workmen at?—From 2s. 6d. to 3s.

32482. Take it at 3s. The value of the cotton in it alone is more than eighteen pence, if your figures are right—the raw cotton?—I am not talking of the raw cotton, but of the manufactured.

32483. Raw cotton is worth 6d. a lb. If there are three pounds of raw cotton there is eighteen pence worth of cotton in it, apart from manufacture and everything else?—Yes, but I am not going into the cost of raw cotton, but merely into the cost of railway carriage.

32484. I think you have made a mistake in the weight?—I am sure I have not. If you like at any time I can get one.

32485. You have told me that the rate on small business is very high as compared with large, and would represent a tonnage rate of 60s. as compared with 25s. 1/2—Yes.

32486. Assume that a parcel of 25 lbs. was charged 3d. 1/2—Yes.

32487. Do you suggest that to take 25 lbs. from Belfast to Strabane, and so on, 9d. is an unreasonable charge?—Yes; I say that it should not be charged at the rate of 60s. a ton.

32488. Do you think it unreasonable to charge 9d. for carrying a parcel of 25 lbs. sixty-six miles?—I think it is.

32489. What do you think the Post Office would charge you for a parcel of 11 lbs. from here to Coontown?—I am not talking of the Post Office or of parcels at all. But carriage by goods train.

32490. But I wanted to see what the Post Office would charge?—It would charge a great deal more. There is no comparison between the Post Office and a railway goods train.

32491. You think it would be fairer to compare a parcel of 33 lbs. with a load of two or three tons, and you would say that they ought to be charged at the same rate?—I say the increased price operates against the small manufacturer. If I had to send a hundred pounds of a quarter of a cut away can you not see how it would operate?—60s. per ton as against 25s. 1/2.

32492. We can agree that if your parcels could go cheaper it would be an advantage to you, but one has got to consider both sides. Now, you want workmen's trains about Omagh?—Well, my remark applies generally.

32493. You are not speaking for Omagh, but generally?—Yes.

32494. Have you a demand for workmen to come into Omagh?—No, but if such trains were run the traffic would increase immensely. They should run more Sunday trains in the interests of other places too. They run a cheap train on Sunday morning to Bundoran in the summer. If the fare was less more would travel.

32495. I am asking about workmen's day trains for every day in the week.

32496. Coontown (to Ffrinstown).—I do not think you understand what workmen's trains are. You say they are not in operation in Ireland?—Not about Omagh.

32497. Then, you do not know what they are?—I understand them in other places, but what I want to say, generally, is that the fare is too high, and

Oct. 21, 1907.

Mr. Patrick H. Leach, shirt manufacturer, Omagh, is president of the Omagh Board of Guardians.

The freight on shirts.

Complaint as to excessive rates for "small" parcels by goods train.

The demand for workmen's trains in the Omagh district.

Oct 21, 1907

Mr. Patrick
McLaughlin,
Chairman,
Omagh, re-
presentative
of the Omagh
Board of
Guardians

that lowering the fares would tend to assist traffic, and increase it. That is, by lowering the fares passengers would increase.

32508 Mr. Deworth—I know what your view is about that; but what I was asking about was workmen's trains to enable people to live at a distance from their work and travel in every morning at a very early hour, 5 o'clock, or something of that kind?—Yes.

32509. You have no workmen wanting to go in by train at 5 o'clock every morning?—No, I was only asking a compensation. There are not many workmen in Omagh to do what you describe.

32510. You spoke of a man who was prosecuted and fined because he used a ticket next day?—Yes.

32511. He could not be fined if he merely produced a ticket and did not know he was not entitled to use it. He could not have been fined for that. A man cannot be fined unless the magistrate thinks he has been guilty of an attempt to defraud?—Whether the magistrates were right or wrong, he simply took the ticket, and he was prosecuted and fined. He was a most respectable young man. I knew him well. It was a most degrading proceeding to drag him up to the court and fine him, so if he was a criminal.

32512. It must have been because the magistrates must have thought him guilty. Of course, if he produced the ticket he could not have been fined?—I do not know what they thought, but the fact is that he took that ticket for 2s 6d, went to Derry same day, came back the next day, and was handed up and fined by the magistrates.

32513. Mr. Sutton—Did he think he had a right to return the next day?—He believed he had.

32514. Mr. Aswerth—Of course he made a bargain, and the ticket showed that the bargain was to come back that day?—Who ever makes a bargain with a railway? People never look at the tickets.

Examined by LORD FINLAY.

32505. You said there was no workmen's train to Omagh, but you did not say that there is no workmen's train in Ireland, because I understand there is a workmen's train from Carrickfergus to Belfast every morning at a few minutes past five to bring the workmen from all along that district?—Yes.

32506. You are aware of that?—Well, I am aware there is one from Newtownards to Belfast.

32507. And there is also one from Carrickfergus to Belfast, and these are special workmen's trains at a cheap rate. I don't know whether Mr. Moore will be able to tell us the rate.

Mr. Moore (Manager Belfast and County Down Railway).—I think 2s a week.

32508. Lord Finlay—And are they allowed to go home whenever they like?

Mr. Moore (Belfast and County Down Railway).—Any afternoon train. It is 6d. a day. In from White Abbey we charge 3d. a day.

32509. Lord Finlay—There is no workmen's train which you run by motor coach?

Mr. Moore (Belfast and County Down Railway).—Oh, no; it is an ordinary service train.

32510. Lord Finlay—How much do you charge?

Mr. Moore (Belfast and County Down Railway).—Four miles, three-halfpence; the journey, sixpence. With that is my point. That should be extended all through Ireland.

Mr. PATRICK KIRBY, Carrick-on-Suir, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Patrick
Kirby,
Tewin,
Carrick-on-
Suir.

32518. Mr. Kirby, you are a poultry?—Yes, sir.

32519. And where do you live?—Carrick-on-Suir.

32520. And you are in the habit of sending poultry by railway?—Yes, sir.

32521. Do you export to England?—Yes.

32522. And do you distribute it in this country as well?—In some parts of this country.

32523. But principally?—Primarily in England.

32524. Now, what railway serves your town—the Great Southern?—Oh, Great Southern, and we have the Dublin and South-Eastern goods trains that have running powers over the Great Southern system.

32525. First of all, I think you have got some complaint to make with regard to the charge for express?—Yes, sir.

32526. Are those returned express?—Express sent to the markets which we attend—Fethard and Clon-

Mr. Telford—The Great Northern also run special trains in the morning.

32527. Practically all the lines outside Belfast run workmen's trains into Belfast at cheap rates?—It is a step in the right direction, but it does not come up to the Continent all the same, where for two-pence and an eighth a man can travel eighteen miles.

32528. Are you aware whether there are workmen's trains in Dublin or not?—I am not.

32529. Did I understand you to say that owing to the high rates charged by the Great Northern Railway Company for your parcels, your trade in Irish manufactures was killed?—Yes.

32530. It was not because you could not get workmen or customers?—Oh, no.

32531. There are lots of people in the district?—Oh, any amount of them.

32532. And therefore what a witness said the other day, that if the railway companies did not meet him and reduce the rates his trade would be killed, applies to your trade?—Yes. They should really treat the manufacturing trade with more consideration. Where the raw material is taken into Ireland and sent back manufactured to England there should be a specially low rate. They would have four times or ten times the quantity of trade, and it would be an advantage to themselves.

Mr. Telford—Mr. McLaughlin stated the rate for shirts from Belfast to Omagh to be 21s. 4d. a ton. There is a rate also of 18s. per ton?—(Pity.)—That is correct, but I know that there has the cartage at both ends added to it.

Mr. Telford—The 21s. 4d. is the whole carriage. The 18s. is station to station?—(Pity.)—It would seem to me that the 18s. rate is a little lower than the other.

32534. Lord Finlay—What is it?

Mr. Telford—18s. is the reduced rate for shirts.

32535. Mr. Aswerth—21s. 4d. is the class rate and 18s. the special station rate?—But in practice it works out, unless you have a large quantity, pretty much the same as the other.

32536. Chairman—There is not much difference.

Mr. Telford—The cartage represents about 2s. I may also mention, with reference to the proposed station at Mountjoy, this was before the company in 1901. In June of that year they had an interview with several people interested in the matter when the directors were making an inspection, and they wrote afterwards this letter to one of their spokesmen:—"With reference to the interview which you good self and several others interested in the matter of the proposed station at Mountjoy had with my directors at Omagh on the 6th instant, I have to say that an opportunity was taken of examining the places on our journey, and, the matter having been carefully considered, the directors, with all the information before them, are compelled to conclude that there would be no such accommodation afforded by the opening of the station as would be commensurate with the cost of construction and maintenance. They regret, therefore, that they do not see their way to comply with the application."

32537. Chairman—Were you aware of that?—Oh, yes, I am aware of that; but the grievance is there.

32538. And you suggest the remedy?—We want a station

and empty fowl crates. We are charged 4d. each for them going to these markets by the railway company, and at the rate of 9d. a cart coming back from Clonmel and all those markets.

32539. When they are full?—Yes.

32540. What is your suggestion about the charge for express?—I should say they should be brought free to those markets.

32541. When they are sent for poultry one rate only should be made and the express carried free. Is that your suggestion?—Yes, sir.

32542-30. Are you aware of the practice in England with express?—I know the Clyde Shipping Company take them from Heathfield by New Haven to Waterford at 6d. a rate, all that distance, I suppose, 500 miles.

Suggested
free use
of express
for empty
fowl
crates
sent to
the
markets.

32521 But they don't carry them free?—No.
32522 With regard to the charge for live poultry, do you send by goods train or passenger train?—I send live poultry as a rule by the Dublin and South-Eastern goods coming on here to Dublin and shipping from the North Wall.

32523 Are the sales stations to stations?—Not station to station. It is from the markets station to station—Channel and those places.

32524 I know that from the Irish stations to your place the sales are station to station?—Yes, sir.

32525 And when you send to England the crates are collected and delivered?—Yes, sir.

32526 Well, now, what is the charge for live poultry to London?—It is 6d. 6d. per cwt for live hens. It works out at 4d. each a bird.

32527 Well, now, where is Heathfield you referred to just now?—That is in Sussex—the London and Brighton and South Coast Railway. It is a large poultry farm. They fatten the poultry there.

32528 A poultry farm?—Yes.
32529 A large quantity of young poultry is sent there for fattening purposes for the market?—Yes.

32530 What is the rate to Heathfield?—Seven shillings per cwt.

32531 How much does that work out?—Fourpence per bird.

32532 The same as to London?—Yes. It is borne principally we ship to London, and they are better than elsewhere. We ship for fattening purposes for killing, and we dread altogether the terrible charges for live poultry.

32533 I suppose poultry is the principal traffic you have on the railway?—Yes.

32534 Anything else besides poultry?—Nothing else.

32535 What is this remark about ice?—Yes, we are charged at the rate of 2s. 6d. per cwt for ice; we use it on dead fowls going to England.

32536 Is it necessary?—Yes; you can't procure food in summer time without ice.

32537 What do you pay for ice at Waterford?—2s. 6d. per cwt.

32538 Is that the price of the article?—Yes, that is the first cost of it like—5d. per cwt. for bridge tolls using scales from the shore to the railway, the tolls are 3d. per cwt. for ice; then the charge is 6d. per cwt from Waterford to Cork, then when we send away the poultry dead we are charged at the rate of 4s. 6d. per cwt.

32539 What does that total up?—8s. 3d. per cwt. But we are allowed seven pounds all every cwt.

32540 You are allowed seven pounds for packing?—Yes, but they should allow all ice free, for it is all gone by the time we get to Waterford.

32541 You begin with ice, and it gradually decreases?—Yes, it melts away.

32542 Mr. Scroon—Does it all melt away in the fourteen miles from Cork to Waterford?—Very nearly. And then when we get to London there is no ice at all.

32543 Chairman—Is ice used right throughout the summer?—Right to the first week in November. We used it up to Saturday last, and if the weather keeps up we shall have to use it till a little further on.

32544 You consider it would be a great relief to your particular trade, and a more reasonable thing, if the ice was not charged for when used for preserving the poultry?—Yes, sir.

32545 Now, do you deal much in turkeys at Christmas?—Yes, sir; very largely.

32546 Live or dead?—I buy them alive on the markets, and send them by railway to Carnock-on-Say.

32547 From these railway stations you mentioned?—Yes, sir.

32548 What is the rate for live turkeys?—They charge 17s. 6d. per wagon. They are charged at the highest rates they possibly can charge. I consider it a great impost altogether to be charged for a few miles 17s. 6d.

32549 How many miles?—Some twelve, some twenty miles, and some six.

32550 17s. 6d. per wagon for six miles?—Yes.

32551 Are you sure?—That is what they charged me last year or the year before from Fribard.

32552 For this short distance you think 17s. 6d. excessive, and that 7s. 6d. would be about the rate?—Quite sufficient.

32553a. Have you represented this to the railway?—Yes. What was the result?—Of course, any odd petition or application like mine will not get any reduction on the rates.

32554 At any rate, you have not got any?—No, sir.

32555 Is that a large traffic at Christmas?—Oh, it is very large. Something about 6,000 or 8,000 turkeys I buy at Christmas. I get them alive by train.

32556 Do you send them?—I get them into my own place and kill them.

32557 You get them alive, kill them, and dress them for the market?—Yes, and we buy a good many round our own districts.

32558 Do you kill at once, or do you fatten?—I kill at once.

32559 What is the latest time at which you can take dead and live poultry to the station?—If they are for the Dublin South-Eastern goods train they refuse to take them after six o'clock in the evening, but if they are for the Great Southern and Western they take them up to any time within five or ten minutes of the starting of their own trains.

32560 As regards that six o'clock on the Dublin and South-Eastern, what time does the train go?—About 7.30. Some nights it may be later than that.

32561 But they don't take it into stores after six o'clock?—No. They might on a very odd occasion, but they always grumble, and don't want to take it. They lock the gates and won't allow the traffic in.

32562 But, in regard to the Great Southern, you are allowed to take this particular traffic in up to the time the train starts?—The reason given is that it is for the goods train. The staff they take goes by passenger train.

32563 You go about the district a good deal buying poultry. Have you any concession on travelling?—We have to pay the full fare.

32564 But as a trader aren't you entitled to a trader's ticket?—I never got it.

32565 Do you know anything about it?—No; I often asked the stationmaster if there was anything like a cheap ticket.

32566 Have you any idea what the total carriage on your traffic would amount to in a year?—Something enormous. Thousands of pounds. Everything nearly goes in carriage. The railway companies have the best of it.

32567 Into your place?—Into my place for the market, and the traffic going out—over a thousand pounds.

32568 This poultry traffic, coming in and going out, engines and everything, you think you pay the two railway companies a thousand a year?—Yes, I think it is more.

32569 You are not aware that you could get a cheap trader's ticket in consequence of that?—No.

Mr. Tolson.—For £250 value and upwards.

32570a. Lord Parrie—Is it put in your books?

Mr. Tolson.—It is not published in the time tables.

32571 Chairman.—Mr. Kirby, you are not aware of that?—No.

32572 Well, you have learned something?—They should give me a rebate on the tickets I have purchased (laughter).

Mr. Croker Berrington, Solicitor.—If he pays £250 value to the company it would entitle him to a ticket. He must pay £250 to the company.

Mr. Tolson.—You take a proportion of the through traffic.

Mr. Croker Berrington, Solicitor.—He used the words thousands rather loosely.

32573 Chairman.—I understand it is merely a rough estimate of what you do pay. You have no figures?—No.

32574 Have you anything else you wish to say in reference to this business?—Yes; I would be in favour of State control of the railways—the handing over of the railways to the State.

32575 And managed by an Irish authority?—Yes.

32576 Have you read the evidence given on that point?—Yes, sir.

32577 By witnesses here?—Yes, sir.

32578 And you come to the same conclusion?—Yes, sir.

32579 Is that a recent opinion, or have you formed that opinion for some time?—I believe it would be to the advantage of everybody concerned.

Oct. 21, 1907.

Mr. Patrick Kirby, Tender, Carnock-on-Say.

Receipt of the Christmas turkey trade, and method of dealing with the traffic.

Alleged preferential treatment by the Great Southern and Western Company of traffic going by their own route as against the Dublin and South-Eastern Company's route.

Question of trader's ticket.

Witness's freight payment to the railway alleged to exceed £1,000 a year.

The conditions regulating the issue of trader's tickets.

State purchase of the railways and their management by an Irish authority suggested.

Oct. 31, 1907.

Mr. Patrick
Kerry,
Trader,
Carrick-on-
Shir.

The extent
of witness's
trade.

32527. How long have you been in business?—I have been in business the past eight years.
32528. And you do a considerable business in the poultry?—I do a very large poultry trade, nearly one of the largest in the South of Ireland.

Examined by Lord Pirbright.

32529. You say you sell 5,000 turkeys yourself, but, speaking of poultry, have you any idea of the number?—In the spring time, from January up to April—chickens and hens about 2,000 per week alive from January. When the live trade is nearly over we kill the majority of our stock.

32530. How many dead?—About the same quantity.

32531. But do you really kill about 2,000 turkeys per week, you don't send turkeys alive?—No, they are all killed.

32532. Are all these sent to England?—Nearly all go to England.

32533. You are complaining of the rate to England?—Yes, sir.

32534. Therefore it would be a tremendous advantage to you if the rate from Carrick-on-Shir, which you say, as I took it here, is 4d. per head, which I make out of something like 115s. a ton—is that right?—I don't know, I did not calculate.

32535. I make it 25 7s. a ton at 4d. a head; therefore if you got anything like the rate for your poultry that the Canadian farmer gets or the American farmer, which I believe is about 45s. a ton, you would be very well off in about a year or two?—We should be able to give better prices to farmers.

32536. You would not put the profit in your pocket, you would give it to the farmers?—It would help us on a bit.

32537. You would give it to the farmer? I think by the way you have given your evidence you really would do it?—It would encourage us more in feeding the poultry.

32538. In other words, you would give better prices and they would give you a better article?—Yes, sir.

32539. I am astonished that a clever witness did not know of these traders' tickets?—I never heard of them.

32540. Lord Pirbright—I am correct in stating that no trader who gives less than 2250 gets a ticket?

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Yes, my lord.

32541. Lord Pirbright—Is there any favoritism shown towards any trader?

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—If he gives 2250 value of traffic to the company he is entitled to a ticket, and can get it.

32542. Lord Pirbright—You never give to any for less than that.

32543. Mr. Croker Barrington.—We had in evidence that in 1904—

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Yes, in the case of a gentleman who complained—

Mr. Toffin.—Mr. Barrington is simply stating the rule—2250, the minimum involved by the company for which you give a ticket.

32544. Lord Pirbright.—That is not the question I asked. I asked was I correct in assuming that you did not give it to any trader who gave you less than 2250, and what you say necessarily leads me to believe that you do give it, and therefore shows a certain amount of favoritism to the trader who knows the ticket can be given, and who probably, although he has not more business, has more desire to put profit in his pocket by getting it.

Mr. Toffin.—Well, we construe rules a little liberally, but not so freely as that.

32545. Mr. Croker Barrington.—Is it in print?—Yes, there is a printed scale.

32546. Lord Pirbright.—Where is it?

Mr. Toffin.—It is printed and kept by the company. They send a copy to any trader who asks for it.

32547. Lord Pirbright.—It is not on the station?—It is not made public.

32548. Lord Pirbright.—It is a thing for a trader who is a clever business man, and looks into it.

Examined by Mr. A. Gwynne.

32549. Do you send from Carrick to London by Dublin or Rosslare or both?

Witness.—The majority of my traffic goes by Dublin.

32550. Do you send to Dublin by the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford?—Yes, sir.

32551. Not by the Great Southern?—No.

32552. And you say that in the matter of facilities you don't think the Great Southern treats the Wicklow company quite fairly. When does the Wicklow train go?—About 7.30.

32553. So that it is one and a-half hours before that you must get them in?—Yes, sir.

32554. When does the Great Southern train go?—The passenger train via Rosslare leaves at 7.15.

Another—the Rosslare Express—at 9.45.

32555. Can you ship poultry by that?—Yes, but not in any great quantities. They take small cars and large cases for London that we don't have ready for the other train.

32556. Up to the time the train goes?—Yes, within five or ten minutes.

32557. As I understand, you think the one-and-a-half hour interval for a goods train is too much and unreasonable?—Yes, sir.

32558. Now, I want to ask you about another thing. You know there was a dispute between the two companies in the courts at Dublin not very long ago?—Yes, I believe they had.

32559. I dare say you know it came out in evidence that both companies had been giving rebates. Do you know that?—I do, sir.

32560. Are they stopped now?—All rebates are stopped now.

32561. After the judgment. I am very glad to hear it. So far as you know, none are being made now?—No.

Examined by Mr. Saxton.

32562. Did the rebates make the rates fair?—On live poultry to Henthfield 2s. per cwt. rebate, and live poultry to London 1s. per cwt. rebate.

32563. Did everybody get that?—I don't know. I believe where the running power system was in force the rebate was more or less given to everybody. Even from the Great Western Company, where running powers were not in force at all.

32564. Both companies gave it?—Yes.

32565. The same rebates?—Yes, even when running powers were not in force at all I got a rebate.

32566. Would the rates be tolerably good if the rebate were permanent?—Yes, if it were something fair and reasonable.

32567. The discontinuance of the rebate has made the rates too high?—Yes, for the past few years.

32568. During the last few years?—Yes.

32569. You say the lines ought to be made public property?—Yes.

32570. And worked as one system?—Yes, sir.

32571. Would it be necessary that the system should be such a one as would secure the profits of the railways for the reduction of rates?—Yes.

32572. For instance, if the British Government worked them as one system, and took away the profits for Imperial purposes, it would be very little use to Ireland?—That would be no use at all.

32573. Would you say that Ireland should buy the lines?—Yes.

32574. And that there should be a representative authority, which could be brought to account if it did not satisfy the needs of the public?—Yes.

32575. You say you pay enormous rates. Do you judge them to be enormous by the weight or bulk of your traffic?—It is very high, 4d. a head from Carrick-on-Shir to Henthfield, where the man has to fatten them and send them to the London Market.

4d. a head means a big thing.

32576. What exactly is the effect of that on the trade? Does it reduce the volume of the trade, or reduce your profits?—It reduces the value of the article.

32577. Would you have a larger trade if you had a fairer rate?—Yes.

32578. You could give the farmers a better price?—Yes.

32579. This is a trade which could be expanded to any degree—no limit to it?—Quite so. Up in Calcutta, where there was no market, I advertised a market two years ago, and they are after getting into the poultry greatly.

32580. Do you know that the poultry brought into England every year amounts to nearly six million pounds sterling, from America, from countries very remote, and a great part, I think, from Russia?

Have you any doubt that if the railways encouraged you by more moderate rates, or if the system were such as to allow of more moderate rates, you would

The benefits
of reduced
rates to the
farmers
as well as
poultry
traders

The issue of
traders'
tickets.

The printed
scale not
publicly
advertised.

(See Appendix
No. 12.)

out these countries and take a good deal of the poultry trade in England?—I believe we could do it.

32635. As to the crates you send out to be filled—you have to complain of local rates as well as of through rates?—We are charged fourpence for the crates if we are only sending them to Fiddown.

32636. This charge you consider excessive?—Yes.

32637. If you were the owner of trucks, and if you had trucks to be filled, the law would not allow the railway company to charge you if you brought them back full. It is only because you are the owner of crates, you are charged—a smaller man?—Yes.

32638. Is it one of the bad features of the railway system that there is so much to be found out?—Yes.

32639. So much that should be made clear; for instance, if you were entitled to a trader's ticket, instead of having only some printed matter in the railway office of which nothing is known, there should be some plain information furnished to the traders concerned?—That would be the proper means. But the companies keep it in the dark, and we have no notice at all.

32640. Would giving traders' tickets serve to develop trade?—Yes, sir.

32641. We have heard now that your traffic of £1,000 a year would not apply; no matter what your through traffic was, unless you give £250 a year to freight to the Great Southern Railway you would not get a trader's ticket. Do you give that much?—Yes.

32642. Do you think it would be better for themselves, as well as for you, if they allowed traders' tickets more generally?—I know a good many traders who know nothing at all about these tickets, and this is the first I heard of it.

32643. What is the effect of the Great Southern at Waterford refusing to take goods after six p.m. unless you send them by their line. Does it keep goods from the other companies?—Yes.

32644. That is what happens?—If we are not allowed to send the goods after six, we have to give

them to the Great Southern; we cannot give them to the Dublin and South Eastern.

32645. Although that line might be more convenient for you?—Yes, and the goods would be delivered in better time.

32646. So that this rule really, in the case of goods sent in after six o'clock takes away the apparent option of going by either line, and compels you to consign by the Great Southern?—Yes.

Mr. Tolson (standing in a private sale of changes for traders' tickets).—Practically such company has issued forms like these on the Clearing House scale. Some of the smaller lines have a lower scale, as one cannot pay high freights on the smaller lines.

32647. Lord Parnell.—Yes, but we have—say the sender is on a smaller line, although his through traffic might be £5,000 a year, he might not be in a position to claim a trader's ticket on the larger line.

Mr. Tolson.—He would get a ticket on the larger line based on his traffic too.

32648. Lord Parnell.—So that, if his traffic amounted in freights to £250 on the first line, £250 on the second, and £250 on the third, he can get three tickets?

Mr. Tolson.—Yes, if he wants them.

32647. Mr. Awerch.—It comes to this—he can have a ticket on the London and North-Western, which, perhaps, he does not want, and cannot get it on the Great Southern, which he does?

Witness.—The Eastern is the more direct route for me. Very seldom I go by Holyhead.

32647a. Mr. Awerch.—You have to sell your chickens?—Yes; I go across about four or five times a year.

32648. Mr. Awerch.—Are you sure both companies have agreed to give rebates?—I am positive about that.

32649. As far as you are concerned?—As far as I am concerned, and I believe I am one of the largest dealers in the South.

Oct. 25, 1907.

Mr. Patrick Kirby, Trader, Omagh on-leave.

Great Southern trade regulations at Omagh station operate to the disadvantage of the Dublin and South Eastern route.

See Appendix No. 25.

The question of rebates by the Great Southern and Western and Dublin and South Eastern Railway Companies.

Mr. Joseph Anderson, Representative of the Omagh Urban District Council and Chamber of Commerce.

Drumry—rates for large quantities reasonable.

Complaint as to excessive "scale" 1906a.

Present scale in operation since 1893.

Mr. JOSEPH ANDERSON examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Witness.—May I ask a question on a point that was raised by the last witness, with regard to these traders' tickets, before you enter on any evidence? I am interested in the matter. I have heard a gentleman state at the table that there is such a thing in existence as a printed list. I asked on one occasion how these traders' tickets could be obtained, or if there were such a thing. I was told there was such a thing to be got, and that the only way to apply was to make up the amount of money I paid to the Great Southern Railway and submit it to the goods manager. I heard for the first time to-day that there was such a thing as a printed document, explaining on what conditions tickets were granted. I should also like to know if that applies to goods traffic and to passenger traffic—the amount paid over.

32646a. Chairman.—I think only goods rates.

Witness.—For instance, I cross to England about ten times in the year. I take a return ticket from Omagh to London, as the case may be. Surely that ought to work in?

32646. Chairman.—You may take it from me, it does not apply to passenger traffic. It is simply the same thing as applies in England—to goods—and it has been in force for fifty years. Now we met a colleague of yours from Omagh this morning. You appear on behalf of the Omagh Urban District Council and Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

32651. Principally for the Chamber of Commerce? Yes.

32652. Are you a member of it?—Yes.

32653. What are you in Omagh?—A draper.

32654. Have you been there long?—Since 1896.

32655. What particular industry do you wish to represent here to-day? Is it your drapery business, or do you wish to speak with reference to general goods traffic and live stock?—The drapery business and general traffic—of course my own business as a draper.

32656. With reference to goods rates for live stock or farm produce. You cannot speak from your own knowledge? For farm produce I can give the rates that are charged, at least some farm produce, as well as groceries and other goods outside my own business.

32657. Had we not better take your business first, and let us see what you have got to say about that. Of course you get traffic from England to Omagh, do you send anything from Omagh to England?—No; practically nothing.

32658. All imported?—It is all imported.

32659. Now, the rates—we heard a good deal about imported rates. Are the rates, in your opinion, fair and reasonable?—Well, for large quantities I suppose they are, seeing that the Great Southern have no competition in Omagh, but, what I hold a hardship, comes in on small quantities, which come under the head of scaled charges. For instance, if you take any particular rate per ton, and work it out for half a hundredweight, a hundredweight, up to three hundredweight, as the case may be—we must go beyond three hundredweight before we get the advantage of the tonnage rate—instead of paying 50c. rate we pay very considerably more than that for, say, one hundredweight or two hundredweight.

32660. We had that very fully this morning, and details were given. I do not think we need enlarge upon the subject. What you contend is that the scale rate should apply to small quantities?—Yes; for three hundredweight, and under.

32661. The scale of rates in operation for traffic carried in lots under three hundredweight, are in your opinion excessive?—Yes. My contention is that when those rates were fixed a great many years ago trade was conducted on very different lines from what it is to-day.

32662. Are you aware when the scale was fixed?—Several years back.

32663. How many years?—There was one Act passed in 1893.

32664. I was under the impression this scale was put in operation in 1893.

Mr. Tolson.—It came into force on 1st January, 1893.

32665. Chairman.—It came into force on the 1st January, 1893?—That was with regard to classification in taking and consigning goods. For instance, up to that time there was no such thing allowed as mixed packing, third, fourth, and fifth classes; at the particular time it was arranged to be consigned on the

Oct. 21, 1897.

Mr. Joseph Anderson, Representative of the Omagh Urban District Council and Chairman of Committee.

Review of the goods' classification suggested.

intermediate rate, third, fourth, and fifth classes could be consigned under the head of fourth class, but in many cases that does not apply. My contention is that when those rates—for instance, the fifth class rate—were introduced—take, for instance, silks, furs, straw, any of those things that come under the fifth class—there was no such thing in those days as a woman's bonnet or hat to come at 1s., or to be re-tailed at 1s. The price would run from 3s. to 15s. or as a punnet. Now, there are thousands of those articles sold at present up and down the country from 6d. to 3s. or 3s. 6d., and we have got the same rate to pay. The same thing applies to furs. There was no such thing as a tipper or a collar under 2s. 6d. or 2s. Now the great bulk of the trade is done under 50s., heaps of them being sold at 4s. or 5s., and still the rate remains at 120s.

32656. How is the railway company to know that?—They have been told it, and I have told them myself.

32657. Would the goods you suggest be shoddy, or satisfactory?—No, they are real furs. The experts in the trade are able to dye them. For instance, take rabbit and marmoset skins, they can dye them to the style of sable or seal, giving them a sable or seal colour.

32658. At any rate, the package in which they are packed is precisely the same as when the article was of greater value?—The rates remain the same.

32659. The package, as far as the work of the railway company is concerned—the package in which the goods are sent—those conditions are just the same as they were, and the rates are the same?—No; for instance, under the Carriers Act, anything over £10 in value should be insured. Suppose I am getting a parcel of goods from London, for instance, and in that parcel there is £20 or £30 worth of furs. In order to protect ourselves we insure the £20 or £30 worth of furs. If we do so, we are charged the 120s. rate on the entire contents, although two-thirds of that box may come under third class.

32660. That is according to the Act.

32661. Mr. Sexton.—Unless in the case of mixed groceries—

Witness.—The arrangement you refer to was made some years ago, about the third, fourth, and fifth class rates. Under that silks are thrown out, straw goods and furs. For instance, clocks are thrown out in hardware—a clock not worth 1s. 6d.; a few of them enclosed in a case brings contents under fifth class.

32662. Chairman.—Am I right that for fifth class goods, at least in a mixed package, the rate is for the highest?

Witness.—Yes, that is right.

32663. Chairman (to witness).—You say that is unjust, and it ought to be altered?—Yes.

32664. Mr. Sexton (quoting the Act).—“Any small parcel, other than a parcel of mixed groceries, containing articles belonging to different classes of the classification shall be chargeable with the maximum tonnage charge applicable to the highest of such classes.”

Witness.—Showing they are a mixed classification as well.

Witness.—This has been in operation since 1893.

32665. Chairman.—Supposing you, as a sender, or your friends abroad, sent to declare the contents of a package, what is the practice then. If the goods are not properly described?—They are charged at the highest rate.

32666. What do you suggest should be done with that? Do you suggest the railway company should open the case to see what it contains?—No, but what I suggest is, if the package has the appearance of containing certain goods, they ought, in all fairness, charge at the rate for that class of goods instead of shipping the highest rate. Now, if the consignees are not well enough up in the matter, they have to pay the highest rate.

32667. But you have been in business all these years?—I speak for others.

32668. Have you brought that under the notice of the railway company?—As far as I am concerned, I have, repeatedly.

32669. Mr. Sexton.—They are not entitled to do so in law, unless they demand information from you and you refuse.

Witness.—The other remedy is that the sender should specify the goods.

Witness.—Yes, but suppose they are wrongly consigned.

32670. Chairman.—That is the fault of the sender again?—I do not know. Suppose they are consigned at a lower rate or an error made in the calculation or charges then the railway company have an equal right to make the charge right?

32671. Mr. Sexton.—They are bound to ask you what it is, and unless you refuse they cannot charge you. If the consignor of a small parcel declines to declare the nature of the contents then they can charge at Class 4?—I understand that perfectly. At the beginning of the year we had a large quantity of cotton goods from London. Whether they were declared or not they were in bales and the 120s. rate was demanded for those goods. There is no rate for goods in bales of 5 or 6 cwt.

32672. Chairman.—Still, in the South of France a carted in bales?—It is not carried in this country in bales. I never heard of it.

32673. I suppose, Mr. Anderson, you do not suggest that those things you point out are deliberately done by the railway company?—I do not for a moment. I think it is carelessness. For instance, there is a case of ours at present in which the railway company at the earlier, or both—it is being investigated. On the 8th of this month two parcels were booked to a wholesale customer of ours a short distance from Omagh a few miles. They were not delivered—at least they were not received from the arrival station for three or four days afterwards. One of the parcels was handed over and the other was missing. On the delivered parcel 2s. 5d. was demanded to be paid. Of course, this customer evidently did not know, and so paid amount asked. She said to me that two or three times she had been charged too high, and sent me the bill of this 2s. 5d., which was demanded and paid. Now that is where the hardship comes in. A person who does not understand what the earnings is, and these poor people pay what is demanded. It is the small people who suffer, and who have got to pay the price.

32674. She had to pay, but you could rectify it with the railway company?—I asked two or three times for the weight and went on Friday or Saturday night last and got it from the booking-office. Since then the second parcel has been delivered, but I have not heard whether there has been any change made. The proper charge for the parcel should be 7d., but 2s. 5d. the customer had to pay.

Witness.—The local office is looking into it?—(Witness).—Yes. It is an illustration to show what people will do in their ignorance of the rules. They fancy the railway company have power to get what they demand when they put down their bill.

Witness.—These wholesale houses in Manchester and London know quite well what they are to pay, and it is not ignorance on their part to send them out undelivered.

Witness.—If we find a case undelivered we debit orders with the overcharge. I think that the railway company might possibly be more careful in considering what the charges are at times. For instance, Omagh and Armagh are very like each other, and I have known cases in which goods went to Armagh by mistake and the railway company wanted to get carriage to Armagh and then from Armagh to Omagh—the error being theirs. That does not often occur.

32681. Chairman.—It must be very exceptional—I know one case in which a gentleman sent an article from London to Omagh and had to pay 2s. 4d. on it owing to its going to Armagh, although the proper charge would be 6d. or 8d.

32682. If properly represented you can put a notice like that right at once?—But they ought to see the overcharge. If a private business was concerned on those lines they would very soon have few customers.

32683. Have the traders in Omagh any complaint in reference to the time they are allowed to take station to station traffic away from the station?—Yes; they are allowed one day, twenty-four hours. They get a notice to remove the goods at once, but at Coolstown they get a week, I understand.

32684. Why?—There is competition there. That is the only reason I know.

32685. At Omagh you get only twenty-four hours?—Yes.

32686. Is that on their printed consignment note?—The traders get notice—road or timber, anything

The system of charging mixed consignments costs send

Complaint as to the practice of the goods undelivered consignments at the highest rate

in heavy goods, have to be removed inside the time or they are liable for demurrage on the wagons.
Colonel Pless.—It is forty-eight hours, I think, Mr. Anderson.—(If true).—I have been informed it is twenty-four.

32757. Chairman.—I am sorry to say it is not always enforced, and the railways are put into an awkward position by being too late in enforcing it.—It is very hard to get a large quantity away, and to be obliged to take it away in such a short time.

32758. In two days, if it is two days you are allowed?—It is twenty-four hours I have been told.

32759. It is as on the back of the consignment note is it not forty-eight hours?

Mr. Yelland.—I am looking it up.

32760. Chairman.—If it was four days, would you consider it reasonable?—I understood it was twenty-four hours. I might consider four days reasonable.

Colonel Pless.—I am sorry to say it is often ten days. Two days are allowed, and we get into trouble and inconvenience by being too lenient. The time allowed is forty-eight hours.

32761. (Witness.)—May I take it from you that forty-eight hours would be unreasonable?—I don't think it would in most cases, but if you have only two or three boxes, and you have to take away a shipment of coke or coal, it is not enough.

32762. You have not a single case to bring before us where demurrage has been charged?—I dare say I could get it.

Colonel Pless.—We are all suffering from the non-enforcement of the rule as to demurrage.—(If true).—I think it is a very arbitrary law, especially if there is not a congested station. If the station was congested there would be an excuse, it would be quite a different thing, but in our case there is plenty of room. We also complain of the preference rate given to Strabane.

32763. Chairman.—We had all that from the other witnesses, two or three witnesses from your district; that is the reason I am passing it over. I want to see if there is anything fresh you can bring before us not dealt with by these. Now, just tell me, on the whole, I suppose the district is pretty well served by the Great Northern. Of course there are always some complaints, and always will be complaints even of the best managed railway?—Oh, yes. I think for one thing we should have an incoming train on the Bangeman line to accommodate our schools. We have four successful schools on the centre of a very wide and populous county.

32764. We had all that this morning, and it is the same idea. I may say there can be no doubt it would be a great advantage to your people if they could get the children educated at these schools?—Yes, it would be.

32765. And they cannot come if there is not a train?—They cannot afford it at the present rates, and they cannot come in or get away at a reasonable hour. We also complain of the excessive traffic. Colonel Pless knows all about it. We have had it up several times. My contention is that if you take people away from a provincial town or centre it is only fair to allow people to come in on a cheap ticket one day of the week.

32766. There are market tickets, I understand?—Yes, but only from a short distance out.

32767. Yes, a short distance out, but if you go further out, will you not find another market town in another direction?—Not on the same day.

32768. Not on the same day. I thought it was the same market day generally?—No, different towns have different market days.

32769. You seem to be on the whole favourable to the present system of railways generally?—No, I am not.

32770. Are you not; then you are unfavourable?—Yes, to a certain extent.

32771. Have you formed any opinion upon the general question, have you considered whether it would be better for the country generally if the railways of Ireland were in the hands of one authority? Do you think they would?—I do. I believe it would make travelling, for instance, more convenient if we had one system instead of competing lines. If I want to go from Omagh to Portrush, there is only fifteen minutes between two trains, and if the train is ten minutes late I have got to stay in the city of Derry all night. If these two lines were controlled by the State or the Government, or then

was any other single authority where the public would be considered that could not happen. But the public is not considered.

32772. Do you think that if there was one system it would tend also to the development of the industries of the country?—Not only that, but the traffic of goods all over the country, the produce, and everything else, would also be helped if the State took over the railways. It would reduce the working expenses, and then the State could make a connection outside to points like Clough and Drumquin. All these places could be linked on to Omagh and form a connection with each other in that way.

32773. That is local, would it be generally bene-
 ficial to Ireland?—I have no doubt about that either, not the slightest doubt.

Examined by Mr. SEATON.

32774. You believe that a general revision and reduction of rates would stimulate and develop the industries of the country?—It would, undoubtedly.

32775. Do you consider that it should be an essential part of the united system of railways that the savings and economies resulting from that system should be available for such reduction of rates?—I do.

32776. If the Imperial Government managed the lines, or an Imperial Department, they might take hold of the profits, and not leave them available for local purposes?—I don't think they could do that. They would be obliged to spend money on working expenses.

32777. But after the working expenses?—Well, if they advanced money they should expect to be paid back again.

32778. If they purchased the lines they might at any time claim the profits?—If they found the money.

32779. Then is it not clear that any single system, under which you would be able to apply the savings to the reduction of rates would have to be a system in which, under an Act of Parliament, the existing lines would be taken over by an Irish representative body, which would have power to fix the rates?—Well, I would not advocate the vesting of the Irish railways in an Irish authority exclusively, because, unfortunately, politics are so keenly intermixed into our usual proceedings in Ireland that things don't always go as smoothly as they might be expected.

32780. There are politics in all countries?—If the Government had a controlling centre, and had an elective or consultative committee which would meet as a whole, like the directors, with perhaps not so much authority, a body representing the different parts of the country or the different railways that would be quite a different thing. If you have this decision it might after a time result in elections to that position who didn't understand the working. That is my contention, and if that happened the country would have to suffer.

32781. That would be the fault of the election, but surely a community having as vital an interest in the economic administration of the lines and in a reduction of rates might be trusted to see that their representatives were fit to discharge their duty?—That does not always follow.

32782. Assuming that by Act of Parliament a representative authority were created in Ireland to control the railways do you think such an authority, springing from the Irish community, knowing the wants of the country and sympathetic with them, would not be the most likely body to appropriate any profits that would be available to the reduction of the rates?—If it could be safeguarded in any way, so that there would be no abuse of the power. That is where my idea comes in.

32783. Mr. SEATON.—If the State purchased the railways, and if no profits and if no reduction of rates resulted, if there was a loss, and no net income, it would perhaps be rather an advantage that the English Government should have a finger in the pie?—Undoubtedly.

32784. Mr. SEATON.—England never gave us anything except what Ireland's own resources supplied. I never heard of the English Government giving anything except from our own resources, and not even that. It has never happened?—I don't know that.

Oct. 23, 1907.

Mr. Joseph Anderson, Representative of the Omagh Urban District Council and Chairman of Commerce.

Updation of the Irish railway system advocated as beneficial for the country generally.

The application of savings resulting from reduction of rates suggested.

The control of the railways by an exclusively Irish authority.

The need of acceptable authority with proper safeguard.

The advisability of the Imperial Government obtaining a voice in the control of the Irish Railways.

Oct. 31, 1897.

Examined by Lord PRINCE.

Mr. Joseph Anderson, Representative of the Omeigh Colliery District Council and Chairman of Committee.

The conditions on which Traffic tickets are issued.

32715. I have only one or two questions. First, about these traffic tickets. I will read out this regulation from the document:—"No 2 traders' tickets will be issued at the rate of one ticket for each £250 of the actual receipts of the railway company." And it goes on to show that they go on from one ticket for £250 actual receipts to the larger amounts, for 12½ per cent. more two tickets, and for 30 per cent. more three tickets, and actually for 95 per cent. addition more tickets still. Practically, according to that, they do not give themselves any latitude to give a ticket of this kind to a trader if his traffic is under the £250. Now, there is another regulation, a very important one, Clause 11:—"The company reserves to themselves the right to decline to issue any ticket that may be applied for without assigning any reason whatever." So that Clause 11 cancels the whole of the previous clauses, and according to that they need not issue a ticket at all. That is right.

32716. To me it is an astounding paragraph. It is the usual railway paragraph.

32717. Is an ordinary commercial transaction I never saw with a thing—I have just heard it and by someone, I don't know the gentleman, that it is really actually paid or going to the first carrier.

32718. No, it is not. If it goes over two railways it is the same. There is a ticket for that, and if there are two, and you have enough traffic you will get two tickets—another ticket?—I think I am right, sir. It was stated that this gentleman paid so much, but it was on a through rate, and he was not entitled to it, so that according to that it must be paid to the first carrier.

32719. Mr. Service.—To the sending company?—Very well, sending company. Say you pay three money, say, £1,000 in carriage. That is paid to the first carrier. Then a proportion goes to the steamer and there is a proportion at this side for demand

expenses, and a proportion goes to the railway company at the other side, and a proportion to be distributed at the other end in terminal expenses. Can they arrive at the proportion of that amount which comes to the Great Northern or the South-Eastern. Cannot they do that, but, as I understand, they don't. They should have an account.

32720. Chairman.—That is so, they have all that. Colonel Piers.—All that is done, you are perfectly aware of that, sir.

32721. Chairman.—It is the money paid by one trader to any one of the companies. It is the money the particular company gets out of the trader himself, whether local traffic or through traffic.

32722. Mr. Service.—The sending company. Actual receipts from the trader?—(Witness).—How is the company to get out the exact sum?

Colonel Piers.—If any trader asks the company for a ticket they will ask and find out what the value of his traffic is?—(Witness).—They are very dilatory in giving the particulars.

32723. Chairman.—Give him the pamphlet. You circulate it, don't you?

Colonel Piers.—We do?—(Witness).—It is the first time I have heard of the pamphlet.

32724. Chairman.—Look through that pamphlet—(book handed to Witness)—and you will see whether it is worth your consideration?—(Witness).—I heard there was one gentleman from Enniskillen, I think, who used to give £700 or £800, and he lost it because it went down to £300.

32725. Chairman.—No; because it went down to less than £250. Study the book for yourself and you will see.

Colonel Piers.—That is the Great Southern pamphlet.

32726. Lord Prince.—It is the same all over, isn't it?

Colonel Piers.—Yes.

Mr. JAMES M. CURRISON, Newtownards, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

32726. Mr. M. Currieham, you represent the Urban District Council of Newtownards?—Yes.

32727. What is the trade of the district?—Weaving, spinning, hosiery, and linen.

32728. What is the district affected?—Newtownards town, and the railway is the Belfast and County Down Railway.

32729. Is there any other means of transport?—No, except carriers—market carriers; there is no canal or other branch railway.

32730. You will always find carts competing over short distances. You come forward on behalf of the Urban Council; are you acquainted with trade—are you a business man yourself?—Yes.

32731. What business do you follow?—I am a grocer.

32732. You, yourself, are acquainted with the rates for through traffic?—Yes.

32733. Generally speaking, are you of opinion that the rates and fares are reasonable?—The Newtownards people complain that the rates for goods are somewhat too high, and the limit of charge—a five-ton lot—is also high. The charge from Belfast to Newtownards, single ton lot, is 2s. 4d., and for collection in Belfast 1s. 6d.

Mr. Justice.—Would he say for what class of traffic that is charged?

32734. Chairman.—Answer that question?—(Witness).—Heavy traffic.

32735. What kind of traffic?—I am speaking now of bag stuff—grain, meal, lean, and flour.

32736. For special class traffic what is the rate?—It amounts altogether to 4s. 6d. per ton, including 6d. per ton delivery.

32737. That is from Belfast to Newtownards, including collection, railway freight, and delivery?—Yes.

32738. Surely that is cheap enough?—It is carried the right way for 3s. a ton.

32739. Why, then, do you send it by railway?—We cart so much as we possibly can, but unfortunately there is always some stuff that must go by rail, because you cannot cart it. A little more than half goes by the railway, because the carting only costs 3s. a ton.

32740. That is the competition of carriers. Have you any other case? Is that the only example you have got of rates? Through rates, are those fair to business men?—That is the only example I have of heavy goods.

32741. You are satisfied with your own rates—groceries, and so on?—These are mostly brought by cart, not by railway at all. In most cases a trader in Newtownards will have one or two carts of his own carrying down groceries, and he will take a case or make up parcels.

32742. The passenger arrangements are fairly satisfactory, are they not?—My Council is of opinion that the ordinary passenger fares are too high, and there are too many varieties of fares.

32743. That is to say special fares?—For instance, 1s. 6d. return fare to Belfast 3rd class and 1s. 11d. second class, the distance being thirteen miles by rail each way is excessive. Then the variety of fares is very great. There are four different fares in one day for the same class of traffic.

32744. You ought to have them all at the lowest, I suppose?—That is not my case.

32745. What these fares are, in one day, can you tell us?—By all means 3rd class return fares to Belfast are 1s. 6d., available, as usual, for return within a month; by all morning trains up to and including the 12 o'clock, market tickets are issued at 1s. 3d., available for return on the day of issue only.

32746. That is on the market day?—Market tickets are issued every day.

32747. Every day, are they?—Yes at 1s. 3d. in the forenoon.

32748. You have to go before a certain time in the day?—Up to and including the 12 o'clock train in the forenoon.

32749. What else?—On Mondays shopping tickets are issued by the 10.34 and 1.34 trains from Newtownards at 1s.

32750. These are intended for ladies?—Yes, and they are available for the day of issue only.

32751. Surely this all means advantages, not disadvantages?—We think, sir, 1s. or 1s. 3d. should be sufficient without the 1s. 6d., and that these two varieties should be retained sufficient.

Complaints as to the grain rate between Belfast and Newtownards.

32753. You are not obliged to take the 1s. 6d. ticket?—It is not every one who can travel in the early part of the day. Sometimes I may travel in the afternoon, and I have to pay 1s. 6d. It is not everyone who can conveniently travel in the forenoon.

32754. When is the shilling ticket available?—On the Mondays.

32755. I take it to get ladies through for shopping?—Yes.

Mr. TAYLOR.—That is shown by the class of people who come up by it.

32756. Chairman.—That is the object, at any rate. I think you said you were, on the whole, satisfied with these arrangements for cheap tickets?—We consider that the number of trains and the prices are too variable.

32757. With regard to the other matters, have you any complaint to make of your train service?—No, sir.

32758. Workmen's trains, have you any workmen's trains?—We have at ten minutes past five in the morning.

32759. What is there wrong with that?—The fare is 3s. a week and the tickets are issued weekly. We consider the tickets should be issued daily.

32760. At sixpence, one-sixth of the weekly rate, daily?—Yes.

32761. They have to go up to Belfast by one particular train, but they may come back by any train in the day, at any part of the day?—Yes.

32762. They are available for return by any train, any third class train?—Yes.

32763. I think what you suggest, the arrangement for daily tickets, has been put into operation in London, that they can pay workmen's tickets daily, besides weekly?—At any rate it has been discussed.

32764. Mr. ASHURST.—I would not like to say it has been adopted?—(Hfistinct)—We consider it should be applied so that the ticket could be bought daily. If you buy a weekly ticket, there may be holidays, and the passenger is asked to pay for the holiday. Instead of handing the unused ticket to the traveller, they are compensated by the railway companies.

32765. Lord PRIME.—Who do you call the traveller?—I mean the workman travelling on a workman's ticket.

32766. Chairman.—That does not seem to be an unreasonable suggestion?—We think it would be better for the workmen.

32767. Your suggestion of the daily ticket, it does not seem to be unreasonable, because if there was a holiday on a wet day he would not take the ticket. But would not the workman object to having the trouble of taking a ticket every day?—He would rather have an ordinary daily ticket—that is, a sixpenny ticket daily.

32768. Have you considered anything about the nationalisation of railways, have you formed any opinion of your own?—Yes; I have formed an opinion, but I am speaking on behalf of the Urban District Council of Newtownards.

32769. They have formed an opinion and they have authorized you to speak for them?—They have.

32770. What conclusion have they arrived at?—My Council don't believe that State control of railways would be a remedy for the evils complained of. They do not think that State control would tend to efficiency or economy of management. My Council would be in favour of the amalgamation of the smaller systems with the larger systems, but not so as to do away with competition among Irish railways.

32771. That is the resolution. How long since—that time did they pass it?—About a couple of months ago.

32772. Within this year?—When they began to consider this evidence.

32773. Is that their conjoint opinion?—That is the opinion I am here to give.

Examined by Lord PRIME

32774. I take it that you mean that the workman should be able to buy a book of tickets, and each morning and evening give one up, and if he happened to miss a morning train any cause, the unused ticket would do for the following week, the same as the workman's ferry boat tickets are?—What the workman rather wants is to buy a single ticket each day and to travel up on it, and not to buy tickets for days he does not travel.

32775. The Chairman asked you a question just now, he asked would the workman not object to have to carry money in his pocket each morning, and to buy a ticket for every journey.

32776. Chairman.—Wouldn't he rather buy a batch of tickets?

32777. Lord PRIME.—Would not the men prefer that? Have the Council considered that point? Let them buy a book of tickets and use one for each journey, as they do on the ferry-boats?—No, sir; that was not our opinion. We think they would rather buy a single ticket, and if they don't require to go they would save themselves. They would save it the other way as well, if they got a book of tickets, with a certain number in it, say thirty tickets, they could give up a ticket per day per journey, and therefore they would only use a ticket on the day they travelled?—I think that would be satisfactory.

32778. They object to having to get a ticket for a whole week, and they might only travel one day?—Yes; but they have to pay for the week.

32779. They have to pay for the whole week. Perhaps you will consider the matter in detail, and see if that plan might suit the railway company?—Yes.

32780. Do you mean to convey to me that there are fifteen or twenty carts running regularly between Newtownards and Belfast. Then that large customers have other carts, people who send their own carts, in addition to that, grocers and other shopkeepers, who send for their supplies?—Most of the firms have one or two carts on the road every day.

32781. Do you mean to say that one-half to two-thirds of the heavy goods is carried by carts?—Well, take the case of disperse goods, nearly all carried by carts. And yet the railway is there.

32782. Chairman.—And it pays well.

32783. Lord PRIME.—Yes, it still pays very well? (Hfistinct)—We also complain of the congestion traffic on the Belfast and County Down Railway. There does not seem to be any through connection between that railway and other railways. In one or two cases that connection for the Dublin Exhibition had to drive to and from Belfast or walk from the County Down Station to the Great Northern Station in Belfast. There is no connection.

32784. That is a matter of arrangement; you can not, and you would like to go right through?—We have a central railway, we should go right through.

32785. With regard to the various tickets, is this what you mean. There are two or more fares, and unless a person asks for a special market day or deep ticket, the ordinary ticket is given to him; although you or I could go and buy a cheaper ticket if we were a little more care, the ordinary person would buy the other and pay an extra price?—That is not so that is not our complaint.

32786. If you go at the right time, the particular cheap ticket is always given?—So I understand. That is correct.

32787. It rather left the impression on my mind that it was otherwise?—No.

32788. Chairman.—That point is all right?—Yes.

32789. Lord PRIME.—What you do mean then is that during the day you would rather have one price, an average price. You have 1s. 3d. one part of the day, 1s. 3d. and 1s.; you would rather pay 1s. 3d. as the common fare?—That is really what we complain of, the great variety of fares.

32790. Then, as to the question of State control. Do you mean by State control that they should be taken over by the present Government—the British Government; that they shall come forward and buy the railways, and that they should be put under Dublin Castle management, having another Department, the same as we have already. You are totally opposed to that?—That is the opinion of my Council.

32791. Are the Council opposed to the railway companies being under the management of the Irish people themselves, perfectly independent of Parliament?—They think the management of the Irish railway companies at present is capable of improvement in certain respects; but they don't believe that under State control they would be better managed than they are now.

32792. You would not call in an elected body in Ireland, say, with twelve men obtained from the existing boards, or the chairman of each board sitting; would not that be satisfactory to the Council?—No, sir.

Oct. 23, 1907

Mr. James McQuinn, Representative of the Newtownards Urban District Council.

The most suitable method of meeting the workman's desire for cheap tickets.

The bulk of the heavy goods traffic between Belfast and Newtownards could not be met.

Complaint as to the through connection between the Co. Down Railway and other lines.

Uniform return fares between Belfast and Newtownards suggested.

Any interference with the principle of private ownership of the railways and their management on a commercial basis objected to.

Oct 25, 1907.

Mr. James
McClintock,
Representative
of the
Newcastle
Down
District
Council.

Unsuccessful
negotiations
with Co.
Down Com-
pany for
reduction of
guarantee.

State ap-
proach of the
Railways
recommended.

The extensive
outing of
travellers
between
Newcastle
and Belfast
due to high
railway rates

Reduced
guarantee to
Newcastle
suggested.

32791. You don't think that would improve matters?—No, sir.

32792. Therefore you don't accept any form of public control?—They express an opinion against that.

32793. How do you propose to improve the management of the railways. You say the railways are not well managed, and you want better management. How do you propose to manage them?—That is a matter I don't enter upon. We wish to get our grievances redressed. We think there is no serious complaint with the management of the railways at the present time.

32794. Then you don't want any change?—We think the railway directors are easier approached than, perhaps, a State Department would be.

32795. Did you not approach them about these complaints?—Yes sir.

32796. Why did you not get them redressed?—Perhaps they thought them unreasonable. I have often approached the County Down Directors, and always found them a most pleasant body to do business with.

Examined by Mr. ACHESON.

32797. Just to make clear one other point, let me put that to you—You object to State control; by that you mean, I suppose, State ownership or State working, don't you? You don't suggest that the railways ought to be as they please, do you? The State ought to look after the railways to some extent, still leaving them in private hands as to ownership and working?—What we object to would be State control, something like the Post Office, something of that kind of control.

32798. Then State management is what you mean to object to?—That is what we mean.

32799. You don't suggest that we, sitting here, appointed by the Government, to report how the Government should control the railways, ought to say that there should be no Government control at all?—Oh, yes, we think there should be some Department which should have a right over the whole system. They should keep on some Department like the Railway and Canal Commissioners that we have at present.

32800. You do want some control. What you come here to protest against is Governmental direct management?—That might be so.

32801. That is what I think you must mean. You could not mean to propose that the railways should do just what they like. Now, just one other thing—about the carting. Does it seem to you to be strange that the carters should beat the railways over a distance of nine miles?—It is thirteen miles by rail, and only eight miles by cart.

32802. That, no doubt, gives the carters an additional advantage. But does it seem—the distance being eight Irish miles by road—that the railway should naturally get much of the traffic?—We think that if the railway rates were so reduced these carters could be put off the road entirely.

32803. Look at it, the railway has got the loading and unloading to do. Is this a pretty expensive item compared with the whole job?—Yes.

32804. If they reduced the rate to the point that it happened it did not pay them, it would be better to keep out of the traffic and let the carters have it. Don't you think so?—They could not pay 6½ per cent. if they did that.

32805. You don't suggest that you want them to take away traffic from the carters if it injures both them and the carters?—What we think is that if the carters are able to do the work at 3s. the railway company should be willing to do it. It must pay the carters or they would not do it. If it was a loss they could not do it.

32806. You really think the railway companies can afford it. It is not uncommon to see carters in the London district competing with the railway companies up to twenty or twenty-five miles?—Well, formerly the railway rate was 2s., now it is 2s. 4d.

32807. What kind of traffic was that for?—Grain traffic.

32808. At that rate did the railway get the traffic?—There seems to be more carting in recent years.

32809. The railways were carrying it for 2s., and then they raised it, do you say?

32809a. Lord Flicke.—He says the rates might be improved for small lots.

Mr. Toller.—The rate at present is 2s. a ton, with the exception of meal, flour, etc., and under five-ton lots?—(Witness).—That is only for five-ton lots.

32810. Lord Pirbright.—What is it for smaller lots?—Mr. Toller.—2s. 4d. a ton.

32811. Lord Pirbright.—That is what he said?—(Witness).—We think 2s. 4d. is too high for one ton. Of course we get a reduction on five-ton lots that brings it down to 2s. We think we should get one ton (as at 2s.), and that there should be a reduction beyond the 2s. on five-ton lots.

Examined by Mr. SUTTON.

32812. You say the rates for goods are too high and that the ordinary passenger fares are excessive? Have you followed the evidence before this Commission?—Not very closely. I have looked at a great part of the evidence, but not very closely.

32813. Perhaps you have read enough to know what is the contention of exporters from Ireland—that the low charges in force from the Continent into Great Britain have greatly developed Continental trade, and that on the other hand the trade of Ireland in agricultural produce to Great Britain has by the same means been restricted?—That seems to be the case.

32814. And also that Irish manufactures, generally, throughout the country—I do not now speak of any particular district—have been very much hampered by the low import rates at which manufactured goods are carried into this country?—Yes.

32815. That appears to disclose a serious state of affairs; it seems to indicate that the interests of this country are deeply concerned in a general revision of rates; would you agree with that?—Yes, certainly.

32816. Now about State control, when you object to it have you in your mind the purchase of the lines by the Imperial Government and the management and working of them by a Department controlled by London, such as you are now familiar with in this country?—Either from London or from Dublin, so object to that.

32817. Or even from Belfast?—Or even from Belfast.

32818. You are aware, of course, of the effects of public management in other countries generally?—Generally I have seen it stated in the newspapers.

32819. The people of these countries seem to be satisfied with their systems of State railways, they do not propose to go back to the system of private ownership?—I don't know whether that is generally the case or not.

32820. It is clear, is it not, that these public systems of railways have resulted in great reductions of rates and fares and a great development of the trade and traffic of these countries?—Perhaps in a new country that might have happened, but would it do for us?

32821. There are old as well as new countries where they have these State railways—countries like Germany, Denmark, and Holland. They are not new countries?—I know that.

32822. Is your view the same as that of your Council?—I don't come here to express any opinion except that of the Council.

32823. Have you an opinion of your own?—I will not say.

32824. Do you think that minute of the Council prevents you from expressing any opinion of your own?—I am sent here to express the opinion of the Council.

32825. Are you expressing your own opinion?—I don't express any private opinion on the matter.

32826. Suppose there was a fair prospect that by the establishment of a united system of public railways in Ireland, controlled, let us say, by a representative body, which the Irish people at large would have to elect, suppose it was clear that by such a system you could get an extensive reduction of rates and fares and go on to develop Irish prosperity, would you still prefer to such a system the system under which the railways are run for private profit, would you still say that the railways should remain as they are?—We would wish to see any circumstances offered under which we could have a reduction of rates if it were possible.

let my Council would not favour the control of the railways in Dublin by a Department, such as you suggest.

32827. You would have higher rates under private companies rather than low rates under Irish public control? Is that the Newtownards policy?—No, sir.

32828. What then—I have just put it to you. Even if there was a fair prospect of a reduction of rates which could be applied to the development of the country, you in Newtownards, whatever might be the public authority having control of these lines in Ireland, whatever the rest of Ireland might do, you would prefer private companies and higher rates?—Yes, private lines. The Newtownards Council are in favour of private lines. We wish to amalgamate the smaller lines. That is what we approve.

32829. You would rather have private companies even if it meant higher rates than public railways with low rates and some prospect of the prosperity of the country?—Oh, we also want low rates. That is what we ask for. But I will not go any further than that.

32830. And private-owned lines meant the old high rates and public ownership would mean a reduction of rates for the public benefit?—I will not go any further than the Council's resolution.

Mr. TAYLOR.—You spoke about the connection between trains on the Belfast and County Down Railway and the Great Northern, I would like to know what particular want of connection you mean, what service?

32831. Lord FERRIS.—I think what he wants is to go through from Newtownards to Dublin without having to change?—(Witness).—It is the walking across the car.

Mr. TAYLOR.—I thought it was the time of the trains.

32832. Lord FERRIS.—Oh, no. (To Witness).—I don't think you meant to convey that coal traffic and

stone traffic from Newtownards was included in your complaint about heavy goods?—To some extent; but these and grain are ordinarily brought down by rail.

32833. Coal traffic goes to Newtownards by rail?—It does.

32834. In that case they give special low rates for coal and therefore traffic goes that way, and if they did the same thing for ordinary traffic, if they brought down the ordinary charges to something like these special rates, they would get all the goods by rail?—I believe they would. The rate of transit in these cases is something lower than for ordinary goods.

32835. Are there any other special rates, the same as coal?—There is a special rate for general heavy goods of 4s. 4d., including collection, but the carters take it for 3s.

Mr. Moore (Manager, Belfast and Co. Down Railway).—That is quite right, but Mr. M. Catchers knows that the carter gets in Belfast 1s. from the people where he is making delivery. That gives him 4s., the same as the railway company gets.

32836. Mr. Aswerth.—Why then do they send it by cart?

Mr. Moore.—There are only two regular carters, the Marthas. It is quite incorrect to say that there are more than these two regular carters, but there are several traders in Newtownards who have carts, almost everyone of them has a cart, and in a country place like this, where so many people have carts, if there is a day when they have no work for them they let them out; they would send them into Belfast for a load rather than have the horses standing.

(Witness).—It is a mistake to say the carter charges 3s. and collects 1s. The charge of 3s. includes collection in Belfast and delivery in Newtownards. I have had it done—by Mr. Martin—collected in Belfast and delivered at my store in Newtownards for 3s.

Oct. 25 1907

Mr. James M. Catchers, Representative of the Newtownards Urban District Council.

The carriage of goods received to between Belfast and Newtownards

Explanation as to the cause

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FIFTY-FOURTH PUBLIC SITTING—TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 1907.

In the Council Chamber, Royal Dublin Society, Leinster House, Dublin.

Commissioners present—Right Hon. Lord FINNEL, P.C. (in the Chair); Colonel HUTCHESON FOX; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ACWORTH;

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

OCT. 22, 1907.

Mr. JAMES W. JOHNSON, J.P., examined by Lord FINNEL (in the Chair).

Mr. JAMES W. JOHNSON, J.P., Representative of the Fermanagh County Council. I have to apologise for the Chairman's absence. He was called away unexpectedly to London, but I am sure we will all assist in doing what we can in his absence, which he himself regrets very much.

32837. Now, Mr. Johnson, you are a magistrate of the County Fermanagh?—Yes.

32838. Have you any views in connection with the traffic from your district?—Yes, I think we are in a very unfavourable position. I am treated very unfavourably by the railway company.

32839. Now, are you speaking for the Fermanagh County Council or are you merely appointed by the Fermanagh County Council to give evidence, and giving it of your own knowledge?—I am giving it of my own knowledge. I belong to the South Fermanagh division.

32840. But were you appointed by the County Council to give evidence?—Yes, I was appointed by the County Council to give evidence.

32841. But the evidence you are going to give is your own?—Is entirely my own.

32842. What complaints have you to make?—Well, Clones is four miles from us, and the rate they charge there is very much cheaper than the rate they charge to us. That is, on one side. In the rate on other lines there does not appear such a difference.

32843. In the rate-book?—In the rate-book. They make a very great difference in the rate.

32844. They make a very great difference?—A very great difference.

32845. Different from the rates stated in the rate-book?—Different to the rate-book.

32846. Keep to that point. Have your County Council drawn the attention of the railway company to it?—Yes, I have. Not in connection with Clones, because I can understand that. There is a canal there.

32847. But the canal does not affect your statement that the rates charged are different from those in the rate-book?—Yes.

32848. Now, are you clear on that. Have you got any papers showing that the rate in the rate-book was different from what they charged you?—They charge me 5s 2d for all feeding stuffs from Belfast to Newtownbutler.

32849. What was it in the rate-book?—5s 2d.

32850. That is the same as what they charged you?—Yes, but then Clones is only four miles different, and they charge 7s. there.

32851. Then your evidence is that they charge you 2s 2d, which is the rate in the rate-book, but to Clones, which is four miles nearer to Belfast, they only charge 7s 1-7d.

32852. And you believe that the reason is that there is a canal at Clones and not at Newtownbutler?—Yes.

Mr. CREKE, Barrister, Sol. —Ask him the rate in the rate-book to Clones?—Well, I just cannot give you that.

32853. Lord FINNEL.—That is rather a pity?—Well, it is.

32854. Have you any other figures you would like to give, about dealings with Enniskillen for example?—Yes. Well, it is Enniskillen I object to, or the way we are charged in reference to it. Enniskillen is seventeen and a half miles further from Belfast or

Liverpool, and the rate for bacon to Enniskillen is 11s. and to Newtownbutler it is 22s. 6d.

32855. Although it is seventeen and a half miles further on?—Although it is seventeen and a half miles further on.

32856. And what would you put down as the cause for that? Is it competition?—Well, competition against the Sligo and Leitrim Railway. They want to run it out of course and grab it.

32857. And you brought that before the directors of the railway company?—Yes, the Great Northern. I wrote to them several times, even when at one time they did not even put my bacon into the goods store. They threw it out on a train going by, on the platform.

32858. And did not take it to the goods store and keep it until sent for?—Yes, that is charged now. They are putting it into the goods store now.

32859. I take it then that you attribute mismanagement to the railway. Do you consider it as in any way impairing the railway?—I do, certainly, because all the large towns are getting this benefit, because they can fight for it, and unfortunately because there is also the competition of the Sligo line. Well, we have to meet that, of course, at Newtownbutler, and, of course, meat and flour profits are so small, and it puts us out of the market entirely.

32860. You consider, from your own knowledge of the district, that small villages and stations where there are no important traders, are being ill-treated by the railway company?—Yes, certainly.

32861. Have you any view of your own as to how to meet that?—I think that the railway companies have been granted a great monopoly, and I think that the parties that granted that monopoly should have a supervision over the railways, to see that they charge proper rates.

32862. And you believe that if they did charge proper rates, the farmers in your district would grow more hay or more orchard trees?—Yes. There are a great many orchards planted round there now. Unfortunately, we are not an agricultural country. It is too wet.

32863. You mean to say you are cattle breeders?—We are cattle and orchards.

32864. And if you got proper facilities from the railway you think that the orchards would increase?—Cattle and orchards, and the eggs and the fowl trade.

32865. But you are satisfied with the railways in private hands, provided they meet you as ordinary business men?—They are very smart men, and they think they can carry it as just as they like.

32866. If they are smart men, would not they meet your wishes for the sake of the traffic?—I think I mentioned before that the reason for keeping with Enniskillen is that they want to run the Sligo line out. That is one reason.

32867. What is in your mind as to how to avoid that. Have you any wish in that respect?—I think the rates should be made according to the distance travelled.

32868. But you do not think that if you had the lines entirely under one management in Ireland, that would be beneficial?—Well, you know there are lines much worse managed than the Great Northern, and that is the one that I have to deal with. I do not

Complaint as to the rate for feeding stuffs from Belfast to Clones.

The rate—Belfast to Clones compared.

The rate for bacon from Liverpool to Enniskillen.

think it would be well to join the worse-managed houses along with us. I would also like to mention two through rates that they give.

32326. We have no more rates. What would you like to put down?—Iron, say, to Enniskillen. The rate for galvanized stuff and iron to Enniskillen is 15s. 6d., and to Newtownbutler it is 15s. 3d.

32327. That is, the shorter distance is charged the larger amount?—Yes, the larger amount.

32328. Then may I take it that your rates for all your goods are in the same proportion to the Enniskillen rates as those applying to bacon and iron, broadly speaking?—I won't say that, but it is very difficult to find out the private rates to the merchants in Enniskillen.

32329. Do you really think that the merchants in Enniskillen get rates that differ from those in the rate-book?—I do, special rates.

32330. Have you any information on that point that you would like to hand in to the Commissioners?—I have not about Enniskillen, but I have about other places, but I do not know that it would be very fair to give it.

32331. You believe, from the knowledge you have in your own possession, that certain traders do get special rates?—Yes.

32332. Do you not think that it would be fair to the railway and to the Commissioners if you could hand us in some document by way of proof of that statement, although we don't doubt your statement, in the sense that we think you believe what you state?—Might I give the statements alone, without giving the parties that they go to?

32333. Yes. I think that would be fair enough!—Will they have any effect on the parties?—will the railways make any difference?

32334. That is for you. You are afraid of injuring them?—I do not want to make any difference in their rates, but I think ours should be reduced. I do not want to raise them.

32335. I think you had better leave it in the way you suggest. You believe certain rates are given Mr. Croker Barrington, do you?—I wish to discuss any such idea on the part of the companies in the most emphatic way. Of course, it is my duty to say as every time that is asserted, that we make the slightest difference on account of any evidence. I wish to be quite emphatic about that.

32336. Mr. Awerth.—That is not the point that the witness made, but that if he were to give evidence that A. B. at a certain station gets a lower rate than his neighbours, that is not in the rate-book, the effect of that evidence would be this, that that farmer which ought not to have been given clearly, on his assumption, would be taken away.

32337. Lord Pirrie.—Mr. Barrington says such a thing has not been done.

32338. Mr. Awerth.—Mr. Barrington has not said that.

32339. Mr. Serles.—Mr. Barrington spoke simply about the question of punishment for giving evidence. Mr. Croker Barrington, Sir.—I see Mr. Awerth's point. We have no particulars and no knowledge, but if what Mr. Awerth says is the case, supposing a favour was given that was illegal, and it came out that through some misunderstanding or anything such a favour was given, it might have to be withdrawn.

32340. Mr. Awerth.—But it ought to be.

32341. Mr. Serles.—But it ought to be. Mr. Croker Barrington, Sir.—Certainly. He should either not make the assertion or prove it.

32342. Mr. Serles.—He has made the assertion. He apprehends that if he gave the names, that might injure the parties who, according to his information, are getting a rate which is not in the rate-book. He has heard now what Mr. Barrington said, and I suggest that it would be well if the witness gave any information which might be useful. Why should he reserve information which will not injure anyone and might be useful. I agree with Mr. Awerth.

32343. Mr. Awerth.—I see Mr. Johnston's point, but as far as we here are concerned, I think we ought to do anything we can to deprive a trader of an advantage that he ought not to possess and that is illegal, if the case is proved.

32344. Mr. Serles.—That is the point. It is illegal, and if you conceal it, Mr. Johnston, you are shutting illegality!—I do not know whether it is illegal. I think we should not be reduced to it.

32345. Lord Pirrie.—I am not going to press you further.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON. P.O.

32346. With regard to this preferential treatment, you know that by Act of Parliament it is absolutely illegal for a railway company to give any preferential treatment to any individual or any class of goods, and of course if it could be shown that a railway company had done such a thing they could be brought to task; I gather you think that such treatment does exist occasionally?—It does exist. I will tell you how I proved it in the case of the bacon. I got five boxes of bacon sent from Liverpool to Enniskillen, I got it sent to Enniskillen, and I got it re-sent from Enniskillen to Newtownbutler, and it was the same price exactly. They paid charged me the same price. I think there was twopenny difference in the rate.

32347. You got it sent to Enniskillen by Sligo?—No, I got it sent to Enniskillen, passing through Newtownbutler, and I got it back by the same line, and it cost the same. There was twopenny difference, I think, in the carriage.

32348. In other words, you got it consigned to Enniskillen, I take it, at 15s., and then you paid twopenny additional to get it brought back to Newtownbutler?—I paid 7s. to get it brought back to Newtownbutler.

32349. That was the local rate?—Yes.

32350. I do not quite see how that confirms or supports your statement as to the rate. That only shows that the local rate to Newtownbutler from Enniskillen was 7s.—Yes.

32351. How does that substantiate your statement?—That bacon, going through to Enniskillen, passed through Newtownbutler, and came back again.

32352. But the reason for the rate to Enniskillen via the Great Northern being 15s., is that if it did not go by the Great Northern it would probably go by Sligo and by the Sligo and Leitrim, and of course the sea competition by Sligo comes into the question?—It is far away from Sligo.

32353. But it is not as far from Sligo to Enniskillen as it is, we will say, to Dublin?—Well, it is not.

32354. At any rate, that of course, as I have mentioned, is the answer, that if the railway company did not make that difference in their rates with regard to Enniskillen they would not carry the traffic at all. They must carry it at a rate that will compete with the Sligo and Leitrim rate?—Oh, yes, but small intermediate towns are paying the loss.

32355. But the point is this, that if they did not carry that traffic other lines would carry it, and they might in consequence of the loss of the traffic be obliged to charge even a higher rate than they do now to intermediate towns?—We should not have to pay the difference.

32356. If they did not carry that traffic to Enniskillen at a low rate they would lose it and somebody else would get it?—Yes, possibly.

32357. Then to make up for the loss of traffic which they would suffer from charging a rate which the traders would not pay, they might have to charge this traffic which they do carry, a higher rate even than they now charge to make up that difference. Do you see the point?—I see the point.

32358. That is always a danger, that, although it does pose hardly on towns where they have not got sea competition on other means of transport, that where there is a monopoly so to speak—and the Great Northern have a monopoly apparently—they can charge a higher rate; but, presumably, if they did not charge that higher rate they could not carry at all; if they did not charge to further stations like Enniskillen a rate which would compare favourably with the rate on commodities that would come into Enniskillen by other transport, they would have to charge a higher one to the other places?—But it is a hardship on the small towns.

32359. I do not see how you can redress it. Your contention is that the difference you speak of, 7s. 6d., is a disproportionate one?—Yes.

32360. And you would allow the railway companies in the interests of their own line to get traffic, but you think the difference should not be altogether so much out of proportion?—Yes.

32361. What is the distance between Newtownbutler and Enniskillen?—Seven miles.

32362. And that involves a difference according to your statement of 7s. 6d.—Yes, to bring it back.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. James W. Johnston, L.R. Representative of the Fermanagh County Council.

Enniskillen alleged to be preferentially treated in the matter of rates.

Other towns in the district prejudiced.

Probability of the railway company losing the Enniskillen traffic unless carried at low rates.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr James W. Johnston, J.P.,
Representative of the
Fermanagh
County
Council.

Allegation
that the Great
Northern
Railway
Company give
illegal rebates.

The under-
taking given
by the Irish
railway
companies not
to produce
witnesses.

The illegality
of shipping
cattle other
than those
in the rate book.

Information
obtained from
a trader whose
identity
could not be
disclosed.

32990. Of course you heard that at the beginning of this Commission, when there was some suggestion that if witnesses gave evidence the railway companies would penalise them, the Chairman properly pointed out that he did not think the railway companies would possibly think of such a thing, and the railway companies, their counsel and themselves, expressly declared that they would not be influenced in any degree by any evidence that might be given; so that if you could give instances of rebates having been given to traders, and could give the names, I think you might be perfectly satisfied that those persons who are named would not in any way suffer from the evidence which you gave?—If I give the name of a man who gets it at a lower rate than appears in the rate-book, that rate won't be changed to him?

32991. Of course we cannot press you if you do not like to give it?—If you say that, I will give the names.

32992. The Chairman has properly pointed out that he was certain that the railway companies would not in any way allow themselves to be influenced by any evidence that was given here.

32993. Mr. Seaton.—That question is one that only the railway companies could answer.

32994. Lord Pirrie.—I do not see how any Commissioner could guarantee that. The witness has said he would give the names if he was guaranteed.

32995. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—Now, I stated that through their counsel they had expressly declared that they would not allow any evidence in this way to affect their relations with the traders. I am sure the gentlemen here on behalf of the railway companies will recognise that.

Mr. Creber Bastington, Solicitor.—You do not wish me to say it again, sir. I have said it so often that I was afraid of wearying the Commission?—Then I will give the names now.

32996. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—I do not wish to press it.

32997. Lord Pirrie.—Of course other witnesses have said what you have said, that although they could not have their rate raised, still they would not get wagons, and there are so many questions of that sort that I do not wish to press you.

32998. Mr. Seaton.—I am in favour of not withholding any information.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

32999. The only question I want to ask is in reference to the rebates. Mr. Johnston, you are here on behalf of a public authority; you come here as representing the County Council?—Well, I came here as representing my own part of it—the south end of it.

33000. Appointed by the County Council as representing the County Council, to come here as representing that body, or on behalf of it?—At the County Council I expressed my indignation at the way we were treated in Newmarket.

33001. And therefore they appointed you as their representative here?—Yes.

33002. And you tell us that in a case within your own knowledge a trader has got rates that are not in the rate book and that are lower than the rates in the rate book?—Yes.

33003. I take it that you are aware that that is absolutely contrary to the law?—I did not understand that.

33004. Well, well you take it from me that it is absolutely illegal. It is a rate—assuming, of course, that you are accurate—that the railway company has no right to give, and the trader no right to receive. I understand you to say that you are not prepared to help this Commission to put a stop to that?—I got one of the pieces of information from the gentleman himself, and he asked me not to use it in any way that would damage him.

33005. And, of course, in a sense, it would damage him if it deprived him of an advantage that he could only get illegally. Well, we must leave it there.

Examined by Mr. Seaton.

33006. In one case, Mr. Johnston, you were asked not to give the name?—Yes.

33007. Are there any cases in which you were not asked not to give the name?—There is; but I could not say definitely the amount of carriage that they pay.

33008. But you could say something?—I know that it is cheaper.

33009. I ask you now to describe two things, first, that the rebate gives an illegal advantage to the man who receives it, and, secondly, that it inflicts an illegal disadvantage upon every other trader who does not receive it?—Yes, there is a difference to one of these men that I think would nearly justify it.

33010. But no obligation of trust?—He is not a trader in the same way.

33011. One man is receiving an advantage, against the law, and other men who compete with him are at a disadvantage because they do not receive it. I will leave it now to you, as a public delegate, as a man concerned for the public welfare, to say whether you ought to be silent?—There is one of these men that did not bring the goods in the same way; but after he gets it he manufactures it—he grinds it.

33012. But, there are, no doubt, other men, not receiving rebates, who may be damaged by the receipt of them in that case; for it means unfair competition?—Well, if it gives employment in the country that would be something.

33013. If it gives employment in the country?—If it happens to be ground in the country.

33014. If there are other traders competing with him who do not receive the same advantage, are they not placed in an unfair position, against equity and against law?—They are not in the same position, of course.

33015. You know that, I suppose?—I say one is a miller, and the other parties are shopkeepers.

33016. Do you know of any case in which a rebate is given to one or more traders, and is refused to other men whose business relation to the railways is similar?—No; one is a miller and the others are shopkeepers.

33017. You refer in your statement to a disparity of rates?—Yes.

33018. You say that the effect of that disparity of rates in your county is men in dwindling villages?—Yes.

33019. Something over fifty years ago (which is well within living memory) the population of your county was 150,000?—Yes.

33020. Now it is about 60,000?—Yes.

33021. We have had evidence that owing to the working of the railway system, while the imports of food to Great Britain from abroad have numerically developed by low rates, the exports of Ireland to Great Britain have been cramped?—Yes.

33022. A system such as that, pursued for a series of years would account, would it not for diminishing villages, and for general depopulation?—Yes; it would, of course.

33023. And, further, we have fifty-five to sixty millions worth of goods imported every year from Great Britain to this country, goods much if not most, of which we could manufacture. That would account for depopulation, because it would show that our towns have not the industries to sustain the surplus of the agricultural population?—Quite so.

33024. And then, would you say that a system working in that way for the past generation has contributed powerfully to the depopulation of the country?—I would say certainly it has contributed very powerfully.

33025. And that it was the duty of every man concerned for the good of the country to do his best to modify that system?—Certainly.

33026. Now, do you happen to know that the things you have mentioned, the trade in cattle, eggs, poultry, and even in apples, are the very particulars in which there is practically an infinitesimal market in Great Britain, now filled by foreign countries, and not by Ireland?—I do; and our particular deficit as given more to rearing young cattle rather than to feeding them. The principal way that the farmers live there is by rearing pigs and feeding them, and calves, and selling them, and springing authors.

33027. Have you any doubt that the cattle traffic (which as I think your chief resource in Fermanagh) might be greatly developed by such a system of rates as is allowed from abroad into England?—I have no doubt of it. The dealers complain very much of the rates. For instance, the rate to Belfast for a wagon of cattle would be 30s. 5d., and I think that is too high.

33028. I think it is unquestionable that the rates for cattle from abroad are far easier?—Far easier.

33029. Far easier to consign than the rates from

Inland?—Yes, they get also an advantage in apples over Ireland.

32932. Now, take a case. The annual import of eggs into Great Britain from foreign countries is about seven millions sterling, and the exports from Ireland only two and a half millions?—Yes; if we send eggs to Manchester we have to pay 51s. 8d., at the company's risk, and at owner's risk, 47s. 6d., and if we send a case of apples it often costs at the rate of 5s. a case.

32933. A prohibitive rate?—Yes.

32934. There is an import of poultry to the value of a million from abroad into Great Britain, and from Ireland to the value of seven-eighths of a million. Would you say that that is a trade in which Ireland should command?—Yes; it was greatly improved in quality, and holds a good place.

32935. The case of apples is very remarkable. The imports from abroad into Great Britain represent over two millions sterling per annum. Are you aware of that?—I have no doubt of it.

32936. And what do you think the export from Ireland is—at is £8,000, one two-hundred-and-fiftieth part of the import of apples from foreign countries. Is there not room for formidable expansion thereof?—Formidable expansion. And they charge to Dublin 16s. 8d. for a ton of apples, and if you send less than a ton they charge 21s. 8d., that is, any quantity less, and I think they make differences even for smaller quantities.

32937. Is it quite plain to you that the railway system then is cramping the industries of this country in those particulars in which they might be most developed?—Yes. The Great Northern Railway is, of course, the only one I know of, but in the apple trade I think the dealers are very well satisfied with the way they carry the stuff. They give some facilities for carrying the stuff, and help them in that way.

32938. But the price of the carriage?—The price of the carriage is too high.

32939. It does not matter how well they carry if the price is so dear that you do not get the goods carried at all, or if it is so dear that when you reach the market there is someone before you there?—Yes.

32940. Such being the effect of the railway system upon the development of Ireland, would you say we ought to combine to produce some system that would offer that country a fair prospect of development?—I certainly think we should.

32941. Develop agriculture, promote manufactures, stop emigration?—Yes.

32942. And if a system were devised which afforded a fair prospect of such savings, by the use of public credit, and by combined working, as would assure to that country equal access to markets, from which it is now excluded, would such a system be unacceptable to you?—Certainly not.

32943. For the reason that it would be under public control?—Certainly not. I think it should be under public control, some way or other.

32944. And as the grievances are Irish, and the interests against Ireland are external, do you think such a system should be under Irish authority?—Well, I do not know. Irish authority is not successful in business matters.

32945. Has it had a fair chance? I will put it to you in this way. Suppose a system of public con-

trol offered a fair prospect to Ireland of emancipation from the trade warlike under which it labours at present, would you prefer to go on with private companies, as under the present system, rather than adopt that reform?—Well, if it would do all you say, I certainly would go in for it very strongly; certainly.

32946. Then, that is all I ask you?—I would, certainly.

32947. Mr. Acworth.—Have you any objection to giving the station at which this secret rebate is given?

—Lismacash and Lismacash?—Yes.

32948. Lismacash and Lismacash?—Yes.

32949. Now, we can challenge the General Manager of the Great Northern on this point?—Yes.

32950. Lord Pirbright.—One point you misunderstood, I think, Mr. Johnston. The railway companies have a perfect right to give a special reduction for an exceptional amount of traffic. Now, if you send a thousand tons and your neighbour sends ten thousand, I believe that in that case they can give a rebate of 2d. or 1d. or 6d. if they like.

32951. Mr. Acworth.—Certainly, and I think Mr. Johnston so understood. It is perfectly legal to give special rates proportionate to special local traffic. What is not legal is to give a man a rate that is not known to the public and not in the rate-book, so that other people who are in the same circumstances do not get the chance of claiming it.

32952. Lord Pirbright.—I want to get an opportunity of clearing up that question. I am not quite clear on it—that they could allow him to get a lower rate?

32953. Mr. Acworth.—Yes; if you sent 1,000 tons and another man 10,000, paying the same rate, and at the end of six months or a year they gave him a rebate of 2d. or 1s. a ton.

32954. Mr. Johnston.—Mr. Acworth has put it with perfect accuracy, and it could not be made clearer.

32955. Mr. Acworth.—Keep it at this. It is quite a simple point. It is absolutely illegal to give it to anybody unless it is given in such a way that it is public, in the rate-book, so that other people who are in the same circumstances can see it has been given to him and can say, "He sent 10,000 tons. I am entitled to it because I sent 10,000 tons." Secrecy is the point.

32956. Mr. Johnston.—Do you know any case in which a rate charged to a consignor or a consignee was different from the rate recorded in the rate-book?—Oh, yes, I do, in this particular instance that I mentioned. Now, another thing that I would like to say. There is a delay very often of goods at Clones from Belfast to our end of the line. It is caused in this way, I think, that the Belfast trains go to Cavan and Belvoir and they throw off a wagon at Clones, and sometimes it remains there a day, or even more, very often.

32957. At the junction?—At Clones.

32958. Clones is a junction?—Yes.

32959. Lord Pirbright.—I think these points regarding train service have been before us?—I think that there should be a train run from Dundalk to reach Clones about two o'clock, going on to Enniskillen. It is a very great inconvenience to cattle dealers on our line, that is from Derry to Clones, that they cannot get back.

32960. Yes; but you have put it broadly in your evidence that want of railway facilities interferes with the traffic?—Yes.

Mr. WILLIAM ERVING examined by LORD PIERCE (in the Chair).

32961. You are here on behalf of the Ballymena Rural District Council?—Yes.

32962. And are you appointed by the Council to give evidence that they thought would be for the general advantage of the district?—Well, I think that the Council generally is of the opinion that in any evidence that I tender here to-day I will be giving at least the consensus of opinion that is formed by my brother councillors.

32963. You have no resolution of theirs in regard to your giving evidence on their behalf?—Nothing except the verbal statement. I should say, with your permission, that our appearance here to-day is in reference to a case more than the ordinary, and if you would be kind enough, I had a statement prepared that with your kind permission I will read, which explains our whole case, which when you have heard you will, I am certain, agree that our grievance is a real one.

32964. You may come to this a little later on, but I think I would rather follow the general line of your evidence in the beginning, and then come back to anything special afterwards?—Yes, but my point is, that what you have before you is merely an abstract of the evidence that I intended to give, and I want to offer our whole evidence.

32965. Make it as short as you can, and you can see for yourself as we go along. If your evidence does not meet your case sufficiently, then if the Commissioners consider that reading your statement is the better way, you can do it?—I am in your hands.

32966. Do you complain of want of railway facilities in your Ballymena Rural District?—We do.

32967. And what district do you consider is badly served for railway accommodation?—Well, the portion with which I am personally well acquainted is that lying between Ballymena and Portlough, also

Oct 23, 1897

Mr. James W. Johnston, A.R., Representative of the Ballymena Rural District Council.

Undertaking of the Irish railways under public control suggested.

The stations at which the Great Northern Company are alleged to be giving secret rebates.

The system of special rates for large consignments.

Complaints as to delays to traffic on route between Belfast and Newry-Lisburn.

Mr. William Erving, Representative of the Ballymena Rural District Council.

The Ballymena district alleged to be insufficiently served by railways.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. William
Frasse,
Representative
of the
Ballymena
Rural
District
Council.

The construction
of a
light railway
from Carn-
lough to
Portlengone
suggested.

from Carnlough to Ballymena, or at other works, from Carnlough to Portlengone, a distance of about 26 miles. It would connect the sea with the River Bann.

32961. Is that a rich and prosperous district?—In my opinion it is.

32962. Are the farmers all well-to-do?—They are.

32963. And they would be able to turn out more produce if they had railway accommodation?—A great deal. Take the question of lime having to be carted from Carnlough as far as Portlengone and you will see how they are handicapped, also they have a creamery in Aghgill, which is owned by a combination of farmers, and it costs them for carriage of goods about £250 yearly. In this and a great many other respects they are badly off for railway facilities.

32964. Was there any question of a railway in this district that you speak of?—Yes.

32965. Who proposed to build a railway there?—I think it was Mr. James Chaune who was the original promoter of the scheme. He is deceased.

32966. And did he propose to build that out of private funds or on the basis of a baronial guarantee?—I think it was a company.

32967. He did not call upon the farmers of the district to guarantee anything towards it?—Not in the first instance. Of course some of them subscribed their names to be shareholders of the undertaking.

32968. That showed that they believed it would be a commercial success?—Most decidedly.

32969. Now, that district that you have spoken of is one. Is there any other district that your Council want you to mention?—The portion lying between Carnlough and Ballymena; but I may add that the suggested branch from Ballymena to Portlengone is a continuation of one and the same.

32970. And you speak from your own knowledge when you say that the line from Ballymena to Carnlough would be a prosperous line, and would not require a baronial guarantee in any way?—In my opinion it would not.

32971. Is that because of the iron ore in the district?—Yes, and the other industries, the one that is at present in evidence and the others that would spring up immediately.

32972. In addition to that is Carnlough itself a rising little village for tourist traffic?—It is making desperate endeavours to go that way, but it is completely handicapped for want of a railway.

32973. If a railway was brought to the place it would spring very quickly into a seaside resort, and do you think it would pay?—Yes, there is no doubt of it.

32974. Now, have you one or two villages in the district which you think are falling back and not having a little factory for the want of this railway accommodation?—Two in particular, Aghgill and Portlengone. The population of Aghgill has declined from about 1,900 in 1831 to 600 in 1901, and the districts in about the same proportion.

32975. And these two villages you think would turn into manufacturing places, provided they had railway accommodation?—There is no doubt about it. Several times the building of factories was thought of, but after taking the cost of transit by carts into consideration the prospects were always abandoned.

32976. Have you any factory now in them?—We have not. We have nothing but a creamery in Aghgill and a creamery at Portlengone, which is now worked by steam power.

32977. Have you any idea of how to get the line?—Not the slightest, but we have so much confidence in the wisdom of this Commission that we believe they will be able to devise some scheme to take us out of this difficulty.

32978. I think your Council had such confidence in the Midland Railway Company that you thought they might make it?—We are not so sure of that. We never approached them.

32979. You have not?—No, but we think your Commission might influence them to make a line as they are largely responsible for our backward condition in this respect owing to their opposition to the proposed railway in 1830.

32980. But if you consider that it would pay would it not be to their interest to do it?—I don't think they ever gave it their attention. I am certain that they would go into the whole matter they should find that it would be a financial success. The trade of Lismacall, Ebsingh Co., Ltd., midway between Ballymena and Aghgill, which has nine horses carting

daily (about 12,000 tons passing over the roads yearly), would mean a revenue in itself of over £500. Then there is passenger traffic to the number of 22,000 yearly on a safe calculation, also the creamery in Aghgill, which costs the company £250 yearly for carriage of their goods, besides traffic in all other lines, viz., coal, timber, provisions, &c., which a prosperous district requires. This would mean many thousands more. I believe the Midland Railway Company will be standing in their own light if they don't take the hint and agree to make a railway line, or, if not, a tramway of some sort.

32981. And so you have great faith in this Commission doing something?—Yes.

32982. And on what lines had you it in your mind that they might do something?—Well, they might use their influence with the railway companies to make use of their savings and to enter for the people.

32983. You do not want it done in any way by an application to the Treasury for a loan grant?—Well, we would take it that way, and I am certain it would be a great deal better spent here than in some other districts in Ireland which have got light railways through Treasury grants, for I believe it is a mistake to spend money except in districts where it is certain there would be no charge on the local rates. In my opinion a line here would pay itself.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

32984. I think the full length of the line, Mr. Frasse, which you desire to have is about twenty-six miles?—Yes, twenty-six miles.

32985. From the seaside place, Carnlough, to Portlengone?—Yes, and it would connect the sea with the River Bann.

32986. I understand that it could be made along the roadway?—I believe it could; most of the way.

32987. I think there is a main road all the way?—There is, and a good road.

32988. And if it were constructed along the road in the form of a tramway, it could be provided for, I suppose, about £700,000?—I am sure it could.

32989. That seems so great a sum for the development of a district which seems to be, for Ireland, singularly well provided with industries. It has more industries than are usual in Ireland?—Not in the portion that I represent.

32990. I believe there are more industries existing or possible there than in most other parts of Ireland?—Yes. One reason I tell you. The hand-loom operatives that have been deprived of earning their livelihood in this place would be available. Provided there were facilities, a weaving factory, or something of that sort, could be established.

32991. And the district is one capable of spontaneous development, but the want of a line keeps it back?—Yes.

32992. There is an iron ore industry at present?—Yes, sir.

32993. For export?—Yes, sir.

32994. You have 100 tons a week carried along your road by traction engine?—Almost daily.

32995. Carried along the road by traction engine, to the injury of the road?—Yes.

32996. And at the expense of the ratepayers?—Tremendous expense. I have it on good authority that the amount that should be saved in the expense of the roads would go a long way, if not altogether, to pay the ordinary rate of interest on a loan for the making of a line.

32997. Was it the Great Northern Company that prevented you from having this line?—I believe it was the Northern Counties, which is now merged with the Midland Railway of England.

32998. When your Bill was before Parliament they insisted that, although you wanted to have a narrow gauge line, the bed of the line and the bridges should be wide enough for broad gauge transport?—Yes.

32999. That would have been so expensive that it prevented the construction of the line?—Yes.

33000. You have in the east a watering place which is also a shipping port?—Yes.

33001. You have tourist traffic; you have linen on; you have a woollen mill, and, owing to the prevalence of the hand-loom industry in the district at certain times, you have a supply of operatives, who would be available in the case of any development?—Yes.

33002. Well I suppose, if capitalists thought this line would pay it would have been made before now?—I dare say; but I believe that, if they don't see

The district
to be served,
and the
prospect of
traffic.

The want of
railway and
navigation
facilities has
prevented the
development
of Aghgill
and Port-
lengone.

The construction
of the
line by the
Midland
Company to
be suggested
by the Com-
mission.

The financial
success of the
undertaking
anticipated.

their way to stop in, I see no reason why the country should be kept in an unprogressive state of that kind. I do not believe that a country should be allowed to go to desolation and ruin till such time as capitalists thought that an investment of money in a certain direction would yield them a profitable return.

33003 I fear that, until we are allowed to look more after our own affairs in Ireland, we will have a good many causes of complaint?—That is what I believe.

33004 Now, do you think it is a good system that every district should be left to provide for itself, importing secretaries and ministers and officials, and selecting grants, and then the district to come under a special inspector because of the construction of a line. Is that a good system?—Very bad, in my opinion.

33005 Would it not be a great improvement if there were some general authority that would survey the needs of the country as a whole, and, where they found that the circumstances of a district warranted

the construction of a line, would make the line in the public interest, and wait for profits, without laying taxation on the district?—Yes, that is my opinion, and I believe that the time has arrived that the only solution of all the different evils as regards railway management and accommodation in all the various directions, is the nationalisation of the railways.

33006 Under an Irish authority?—Under an Irish authority; and I am authorised by the Council to make that statement here to-day.

33007 And I may tell you that I think that is the way you will get your line, and in no other way.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON PEAR.

33008 Did I understand you to say that the daily output of ore there is 100 tons?—I am not in a position to give the exact figures, but the witness that will follow me has the figures from the company themselves, so that, if you will kindly wait, he will be able to put the figures before you.

Mr. ROBERT GREGG examined by Lord PIERCE (in the Chair).

33009. You are representing Ballymena Rural District Council?—Yes.

33010 That in the Council the previous witness also represented?—Yes.

33011 You are appointed, as he was, to come and give evidence as near as possible to what you consider the feeling of your colleagues on the Council?—Yes, I am one of a deputation of three.

33012 Coming here?—Yes, from the Ballymena Rural District Council.

33013 You have been in the room and heard the evidence that the previous witness gave?—Yes.

33014 And you agree with all he said, do you?—Yes. Mr. Ervine represents one of the line. He is thoroughly acquainted with the needs of the district which he represents.

33015 That is Portlengone?—And Aboghill, to Ballymena. And another witness I hear will come here, who will take up the end of the line from Aboghill to Portlengone. I am supposed to represent the portion of the country from Ballymena to Carnough.

33016 Mr. Steele?—The eastern side?—No. The other side of Ballymena.

33017 Lord Pierce?—The general views that he gave us you agree with?—Yes; I cordially support them.

33018 Now, as regards from Ballymena to the Carnough district, you consider that the line would practically pay for its working once it was made?—Well, I do not know any reason why it should not.

33019 I mean as regards traffic?—There is a very large iron ore traffic, and that has been for the last ten years. We have at the present time one traction engine carrying three loads every day, and two more carrying three loads each every day, over six miles of the road. The iron ore traffic varied more or less. Sometimes we would have six loads of traction engine traffic in a day, and at other times only two.

33020 Is it at the end of the county that that road is kept up?—At the east of the county, and the expenditure on one portion of the road has increased forty per cent, since the traffic commenced.

33021 The company have not to pay anything towards the keeping up of the road?—Nothing whatever. It falls on the ratepayers.

33022 And therefore one advantage from a rail way in the district would be a saving to the ratepayers in regard to upkeep of the road?—Yes. I can give you the figures of the upkeep of the road per mile for the year 1896-7 and the year 1906-7. In the former year it was £60 a mile. For the last year it was £160 per mile.

33023 Are you keeping your roads up generally in the County Antrim and that district very much better than twenty years ago?—I do not think so. Some of the road was in a most deplorable state owing to the engine traffic, and we had to repair it at enormous expense.

33024 Are the other public roads in the County Antrim improving?—They are improving slightly.

33025 And you believe the village of Carnough although in any case an attractive village, would, if you had railway traffic, become of great advantage to the people round about?—I think so. It is a

rather pretty seaside resort, the village of Carnough, but there is no accessible way of getting to it only by car, an Irish jumping car, or broken from Larne. There is a dock there or harbour, for transit of limestone across the water, and for bringing in coals. I wrote to the manager of the Carnough Limestone Company, and if you like I will read you his letter.

33026 What does he refer to?—The amount of lime and coal carted from his works annually at present is about 3,000 tons, but would probably be ten times that amount if a light railway or tramway were constructed. (This does not include his cross-Channel trade). The amount of hands employed is about 250, annual wages from £7,000 to £8,000.

33027 In Carnough?—Yes.

33028 But how would that affect the railway?—He would send the lime by the light railway. The lime from Carnough would come inland to Ballymena, and as far as Portlengone.

33029 You mean instead of being carted?—I mean instead of being carted, the lime would come by rail, and also the cost of carriage would be much less, and the farmers would have a saving in the railway carriage and a shorter distance to cart from the railway to their farms.

33030 You consider that there would be a very large lime traffic over the line proposed?—Lime and coal.

33031 The coal, instead of going by Larne, would, I suppose, go direct through Carnough?—Yes; it is only a distance of sixteen miles from Carnough to Ballymena.

33032. You say that the district through which that railway would run is a very prosperous agricultural district?—It is entirely agricultural.

33033. Is there not a certain amount of moorland and heath?—Our roads run through what you would call a glen, with hills on each side, so that the farmers' operations extend both ways, to the north and south for a mile on each side of the road. There is a very short distance of heath, about a mile of it, about five miles out of Carnough.

33034. Why did the Antrim Company take away the iron ore railway after laying the rail down?—I think the Commission would like to know why, if there was an alteration?—There never was a railway there. It was at the other end of the Glenariff railway. There was a railway from Portlengone to Red Bay, and it did not exactly connect with Parkmore.

33035. Why was that railway taken up?—I will just give you the facts. The company that worked those mines and constructed that railway failed. They owed some ground rent to Lord Antrim and I am informed he distrained for rent and took the railway in part payment, and it was by his instructions the railway was torn up.

33036. In your opinion why?—I would not say that was part of the present iron ore industry at all. That part that you want to connect has better ore than the part that the old railway was on. We have a better class of ore here. It is richer in iron and a very much

Oct. 25, 1907.

Mr. William Ervine, Representative of the Ballymena Rural District Council.

The nationalisation of the railways, and their control by an Irish authority suggested.

Mr. Robert Gregg, Representative of the Ballymena Rural District Council.

The tourist traffic and large industry of Carnough capable of great development.

The district to be served by the proposed Carnough and Ballymena Railway—agricultural and prosperous.

The abandonment of the Portlengone and Red Bay railway.

Railway torn up by Lord Antrim who distrained for rent.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. Robert
Grogan,
Representative
of the
Ballymena
Rural
District
Council.

Proposed
line from the
area ore mines
to Carrington

better class of ore than what they could ship from Glenarm.

33037. The place that you want to connect has better ore than the place where the old railway was?—We have a better class of ore. It is richer in iron and a much better class of ore than they ship from Glenarm.

33038. That is all I want to get of the evidence—that the old line was for ore that had a very much smaller percentage of iron and the ore in your district is much better?—At the present time the iron ore traffic is coming out of the area to Ballymena—fully six miles—and it is taken by rail thirty miles into Belfast.

33039. Or into Larne?—And into Larne. If we had a railway from the mine to Carrington—it would be only ten miles, and there would be no load to change. This has all to be handled and lifted into the train wagons by manual labour.

Examined by Colonel HERRINGTON, F.R.S.

33040. I understand you to say that your output is 30,000 tons of ore in the year—100 tons a day?—I approached the "captain" of the iron ore mines a fortnight ago, and he had only two motor engines then, and he said their output was fifty tons a day.

33041. I think you spoke of 100 tons a day?—100 tons.

33042. That would be 30,000 tons in the year?—In order to be correct, you may put it at 85 to 100 tons a day.

33043. Then it would be, roughly, 15,000 to 20,000 tons a year?—Yes.

33044. What do you pay for the cost of transit of the ore to Ballymena?—Of the ore.

33045. Of the ore?—The traction engines belong to the Antrim Iron Ore Company.

33046. But it costs something?—I expect about 1s. 6d. per ton—perhaps it might be 1s. a ton. The information I could give you is of former years, twenty years ago, when it was carried, and it was taken by horses and carried, and the price paid then was 2s. 6d. a ton. They are carrying it for a good deal less by traction engine.

33047. That would be anything you like from £750 to £1,000 a year for cost of transit under existing circumstances to Ballymena?—Yes.

33048. In addition to that cost, you say that the extra expense for the upkeep of roads comes to about £40 a mile for the six miles, or not less than, say, £250 a year—the additional cost owing to the heavy traffic on the roads entails a levy of £250 a year over and above what they would otherwise cost?—I have it in writing from the County Surveyor, that the average cost at the time I spoke of, 1896-7, was £260 a mile, and in 1906-7 it was £200 per mile.

33049. In other words, a distance of six miles costs £250 a year, so that the total saving which would be effected if the Iron Ore Company traffic went by rail would be at least £1,000 to £1,500 a year?—That is my own estimate.

33050. And on a large estimate, if there was an increase in the output, it would be considerably more than that. We will assume that it would be, at any rate, a saving of £1,500 a year, on the lowest computation. The cost of the railway would be, roughly, £100,000, and to meet the dividend of 3 per cent. would involve, perhaps, £3,000 a year. Towards that you have—if your figures are at all correct—you have at once some £1,500 a year, at the lowest computation, to meet the expenditure on that capital outlay. Would not that be so?—I presume your figures are correct.

33051. Roughly speaking, I think you will find they are. You would have at least £1,500 a year for interest on the capital cost of construction, and if your output was developed you would probably have sufficient to pay the full interest on the capital cost of construction. Under those circumstances, I suppose you consider there would be no very great risk involved on the Treasury if they were to make a grant of money for the construction of such a line?—Personally, I would be prepared to invest up to £1,000 in the railway with a guarantee of 4 per cent. from the county.

33052. We have heard a good deal about districts being opposed to any further guarantee

owing to the heavy losses which have been, unfortunately, sustained, and we have had evidence there would be a disinclination on the part of County Councils and others to undertake any further liability. Do you think that would hold good in your particular district, or would the county be prepared to do something?—I do not know the mind of the County Council, but I consider that it would be good policy in saving on the part of the Rural District Council. This railway is entirely, with the exception of four miles, in the Ballymena rural district, and at the present time it is costing the Rural District and Urban Council of Ballymena £1,500 a year in the upkeep of the roads on account of iron ore traffic, and I am of opinion it would be a good policy to guarantee £1,000 a year and save £200 a year.

33053. That is rather more than I think you would save. Assuming the county would not be prepared to join the guarantee, there would be no great risk on the part of the Treasury in advancing the sum of money necessary to construct such a line?—Ultimately, I am of opinion that the railway would pay. With a light tramway or railway constructed along the county road, I think the amount of money spent on constructing the railway would be very small in comparison with the benefit that would accrue from it to the district.

33054. You spoke of the Eglinton Chemical Company as being a company that was shipping also?—They are at Glenarm.

33055. What do they ship?—Limestone, whitening, coal, and kieselguhr.

33056. I suppose that both that company and the Iron Ore Company have to import a considerable amount of coal?—Yes.

33057. Does it come by sea?—It comes by sea. They have a dock or harbour at Glenarm.

33058. In the event of a railway being made, do you expect any portion of the coal would come in by the railway?—From Ballymena?

33059. Supposing there was a railway from Ballymena to Carrington, would any portion of the imported traffic which now comes by sea come by rail?—It would come by sea to Carrington and Glenarm, and then by rail inland.

33060. I was wondering whether in addition to the traffic inland to Ballymena you would get any additional traffic outward to Carrington by rail?—We expect there would be additional traffic to Carrington by the railway, because we have three factories on the road—woollen factories—between Ballymena and Carrington, we have three sets of dyeing and finishing concerns about Broughshane and that district. There are about 5,470 tons of goods come from Ballymena to Carrington by cart.

33061. So that all that traffic would go to swell the earnings on the railway?—Naturally.

33062. In addition to the earnings we have already discussed—the earnings from traffic of ore—it would get the traffic out in the other direction?—Yes.

33063. I think that is all.

Examined by Mr. ARDREIGH.

33063. Mr. Grogan, you are a member of the Rural District Council?—Yes, sir.

33064. And your Council are, I take it, the authority for the roads—you manage the roads?—Yes. The Rural District Council have the control of the roads.

33065. Do I understand that in Ireland you have not got the same law that we have in England, where in cases of what is called "extraordinary traffic," such as the manure by traction engines, the users of the road are made to pay a special amount?—We have not got the same law.

33066. Local Traffic?—That does not extend to Ireland?—It does not at all.

33067. Mr. Ardreich—In your view it would be a reasonable thing that it should be done?—I think it should be. I think that the party who get the benefit from the road should contribute towards the upkeep in proportion to the damage done to the roads.

33068. But even apart from that question, you would like to get the traffic off the roads on to the railway?—Yes.

33069. About the railway—Antrim is not exactly a congested district?—Antrim?

33070. Yes. It is a pretty prosperous part of Ireland?—We would like to be called that sometimes. We would like to be called an industrious people.

Yearly output
of the mine.

The ore was
carried to
Ballymena.

Cost of
carriage.

The saving in
road maintenance
if line
was made
sufficient for
half interest
on cost of
construction.

Our prosperity is not nearly so good as we would like it to be.

33071. Is it not a poor part of Ireland?—There are worse parts.

33072. And there are less prosperous towns than Ballymena?—Yes, but we attribute a good deal of that to the energy and push and pluck of the people who live around there.

33073. I do not doubt it for a moment, and your statement is, such is the energy of the people that they have enough traffic to make the railway pay?—That is my opinion.

33074. Or to cover something like paying?—Yes.

33075. In that condition of affairs, with a prosperous population and a good prospect of traffic, how do you propose that the money should be found?—Well, my own idea was that the County Council should be approached to grant a free bottom and let the railway run alongside the road.

33076. Along the county road?—Yes.

33077. That would be a very large contribution by the district to the making of the railway?—Yes.

33078. Is the road wide enough and flat enough?—The gradients of the road are fairly good.

33079. Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.—The width?—At my place, which is on the road, it is thirty feet wide, clear of the foot-path. It is not all that width, but in order to get over the difficulty I would remove one of the county fences—

33080. Mr. Acworth—Put the fence back?—Remove the fence and plant a gravel set hedge and a substantial paling, and by the time the paling would be done the hedge would be up, and nobody would lose anything, and the road would be wide enough to construct the railway or tramway.

33081. You suggest that the County Council should give the ground gratis?—Yes; I am persuaded the Council would.

33082. That would be a valuable contribution, clearly. There is no land to pay for, and the whole of the rest of it should be due for £3,000 a mile, or something of that sort?—I have no idea.

33083. It should cost some figure of that kind. How do you suggest the money may be found?—I do not really know. I think the Government might borrow money from the Board of Works and advance it to the Rural District or to the County Council, and let them pay back the loan by instalments annually, or some means like this might be devised.

33084. Do you mean to say that you would be prepared to take the risk, if you could borrow the money at 3 per cent, from the Government—that the people in the locality would take the risk of paying interest and working the line themselves?—The Council I represent does not say that, for it has never cropped up how we will get the money, and I do not think I would be justified in making a suggestion as to anything, but that is my own view.

33085. Clearly, I am glad you stated that, so that there would be no misunderstanding. What is your own view?—My own view is that I would like very well to see a railway, and a guarantee given by the County Council to the shareholders, and by doing so I am of opinion that there would be a saving to the ratepayers, and if there could be any better means devised, I can assure you, whereby the money could come easier, and there would be no loss to the ratepayers, I would be very pleased.

33086. I do not want to pin you to details, but I understand your view is that it would be worth while to Ballymena people to take the risk and give some guarantee?—It would be a saving, in my opinion.

33087. You have got these the Midland Railway of England?—Yes. The Northern Counties Committee.

33088. Have you ever approached them and asked them "If we give a guarantee, will you make the line?"—We have not. I understand that there was a railway in contemplation to the village of Broughshane and it was largely owing to the opposition of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway that the matter fell through.

33089. Is that half-way to the coast?—Yes.

Mr. Bruce (the previous witness)—If I might make a remark. A resolution did go from the Rural Council to the Midland Railway Company, and it is pending. It is to come before the directors, and we had no further intimation about it.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Esq.—Will you give us the date?

Witnesses—At the time the first resolution was sent forward to the Vice-Regal Commission here.

33090. Mr. Acworth—You have actually approached them?—They have got intimation of the County scheme, in other words.

33091. I do not follow?—They have got intimation that the County or District Council was moving in that direction.

33092. Have you asked them to make the railway?—We only passed a resolution and sent a copy of the resolution passed. I think that was all.

33093. And the resolution was that a railway was wanted?—That we wanted a railway.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Esq.—Anything about a guarantee?

33094. Mr. Acworth—That is what I was going to ask. You did not suggest it in the resolution?—No, sir. It is my own suggestion. I gave you to understand I had no authority to make it for the county.

33095. In the communication you made to the Midland Railway Company there was no suggestion that the district was prepared to do anything in the way of guarantee?—None whatever.

33096. It would make a good deal of difference in the way the company would look at it, and in your view it would be reasonable and good business for you to put your hands in your pockets to some extent?—If the slope of the road is costing the ratepayers from £800 to £1,500 a year extra, I consider it would be good financial policy to subscribe, say, £200 instead of £1,500.

33097. Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.—There must be some mistake. The road traffic is not costing that much additional. Your evidence is that it made a difference of £40. It was £90 a mile, and now it is £100, and that would be £240 a year. It is not £200. Of course you have to keep the road in any case?—The Urban District of Ballymena is at a great expense, for the traffic has to be carried through the streets.

33098. Lord Parry.—And the same with Glenasmole?—Yes.

33099. Mr. Acworth—That is the position. I think you would agree with me that whatever claim a very poor district might have for a free grant, there would not be the same claim for a place like Ballymena for an out-and-out grant?—We think that an industrious people and an industrious district have a right to some recognition.

33100. Certainly?—And they ought to get some encouragement to go on and prosper and improve their position if possible.

33101. But, at the same time, you are not in a position to ask for the whole thing free?—We would be very pleased to get it free.

33102. Thank you.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

33103. Even if you had got power to charge the Antenn Iron Ore Company for the use of the road, that might make the company poorer, but would not give you the railway?—It would not, sir.

33104. You are confident that ultimately the line would pay?—That is my own opinion. I cannot see why it should not pay, knowing the district and the requirements of it, and the amount of wealth and minerals that is lying hidden up in the mountainous district, and has no transport but traction engines and carts for six miles to the station. The Antenn Iron Ore Company, as a company, are handicapped with the amount of money they have to pay for transporting their minerals; to get them made into iron, and if we had better facilities they would certainly develop the industry and be able to pay better wages, and bring back the people into the rural districts, and stop the flow of people into the cities and urban districts, and the country districts would, I think, become more prosperous if we had more industries placed out through them.

33105. Pending the time when it would become lucrative, it would have to pass through a period of time in which it might not pay?—It might.

33106. Do you happen to know anything about the financial results of the guaranteed lines under the Act of 1883?—I do not.

33107. When I told you that out of twenty-two of them, about half of them lose in the working expenses, and all of them, except one, entail a levy on the district, you will understand that there is a certain dis-

Oct. 29, 1897.

Mr. Robert Glegg, Representative of the Ballymena Rural District Council.

Resolution of the Ballymena Rural District Council as to the construction of the Ballymena and Carrigrohilly railway line in the Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee).

The enormous cost of road maintenance.

Anticipated financial success of the Ballymena and Carrigrohilly line if constructed.

The losses sustained under the Act of 1883—Financial results.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. Robert
Griegg,
Representative
of the
Ballynasc
Rural
District
Council.

The proposed
line from
Ballynasc
to Dromagh.

The position
of the guaran-
tees as regards
loss from
working
expenses.

Uniformity
of the Irish
railways
under public
control
advocated.

Mr. Julius
McConnell,
Representative
of the
Newtownards
Board of
Guardians
and Rural
District
Council.

Witness's
evidence as to
furnishing
in proof
sanctioned
by the Rural
Council.

Proposed
uniformity
of railway
rates for
road
material.

Ascertained
the railway
rates for
stone.

inclination on the part of ratepayers to incur fresh liabilities?—Naturally enough there would be, sir.

33107 Suppose this line costs £100,000, that would, if raised by private capital, call for a dividend of, say, £5,000 a year?—Yes.

33108 Your ratepayers might be willing, perhaps, in association with the Treasury, to face their share of £5,000 a year; but then there is the difficult question of working expenses. Your ratepayers might be willing to face the financial risk of meeting a part of the fixed charge on the capital, but they might be very unwilling to face the unmeasured risk in relation to deficiency of working expenses. Is not that so?—Well, it would be natural enough that they might.

33109 You say the Treasury never guarantee working expenses?—It makes a contribution to dividends, but it never guarantee working expenses, so that if there was a loss for some years through excess of the working expenses over the receipts, that loss would fall entirely on the ratepayers?—Yes.

33110 That justifies a certain hesitation on their part?—Yes. Excuse me—I do not see why there should be any extra expense in working the line. The district is not unprofitable.

33111 I am not now on the question of extra expense—but in addition to the interest on the capital, the ordinary working expenses of the line might for some years exceed the receipts. The Treasury would not help you in that. It would fall entirely on the district?—I am sure the ratepayers would agree to whatever was reasonable.

33112 I should like to ask you this, Mr. Griegg—do you think it reasonable or right, in this twentieth century, with the example of so many countries before us, that districts should be left, in this matter of transport, to depend upon their own exertions?—I think it should be a National question.

33113 Do you think the line has some when the railway system should be regarded as a whole, and lines should be provided as the order of the day, agency,

providing there is a fair prospect of development, without making each particular district bear the burden?—That is my idea. The time has arrived, and I think it is quite time something should be done for the people of Ireland.

33114 It has arrived, long ago, in several other countries, and I think you think it has now arrived even for Ireland?—Yes. I was through Belgium and Holland on a short tour, and I understood the railways are nationalised there, and the railway service is very good.

33115 Well, now, here is this extensive County of Antrim: the railways run North and South, and you want accommodation from East to West. At present the railways do not provide it?—We have nothing going from East to West.

33116 You have piers and docks at two of these coast places?—Yes.

33117 And two shipping companies trading under difficulties?—Yes.

33118 A line constructed in the district would stimulate, undoubtedly, both the agricultural and manufacturing output?—There is no doubt of it.

33119 Considering that the Imperial Government raises a heavy revenue in Ireland, and that Ireland is now, owing to Land Purchase, becoming the principal debtor to the Imperial Government, do not you think the Imperial Government has a great interest in the development of the country?—Most acutely.

33120 Do not you think that Ireland, as a whole, is interested in the development of County Antrim, as well as of County Kerry?—It ought to be. I think the needs of every part should be considered by the people of Ireland.

33121 Do not you consider that the people of Ireland would regard the needs of Antrim as well as other parts of the country?—We are all, more or less, selfish.

33122 But we are gradually acquiring wider views?—That is so.

Mr. JULIUS MCCONNELL examined by Lord FERRIS (in the Chair).

33123 What district do you come from?—Newtownards.

33124 Board of Guardians?—Yes.

33125 Are you also representing the Rural District Council?—Yes.

33126 That is a district in County Down?—Yes.

33127 In giving evidence you are practically following one of the members of the County Council, Colonel Crawford?—Yes, I understand he gave evidence.

33128 You did not read his evidence?—Yes, I did.

33129 The district you came from, or represent, is served by the County Down Railway Company?—Yes.

33130 Has the evidence that you propose to give been given at their request, in what you believe to be their views?—This evidence before you now was left to the Committee of the Rural Council and the Guardians to look into, and they reported to the full Board, and the Board unanimously agreed that we should come and give evidence. It was sanctioned by the Board.

33131 As I understand, the evidence you propose to give has been sanctioned?—Sanctioned.

33132 That makes it stronger than if it were your own individually. You have certain complaints to make, I understand, as regards the stone traffic?—Yes.

33133 To begin with, you believe you have the best stone in the country?—We think we have.

33134 You are sure of that?—We are practically sure of it.

33135 What is the complaint about that traffic?—No uniformity of charges.

33136 What do you mean by no uniformity? You do not mean to say that they charge one man one way, and another man differently?—There is no uniformity as regards distance.

33137 It is distance you refer to?—Yes. We ship stone from Newtownards to Coleraine. That is a distance of five miles, which costs 1s; and the cost to Belfast, which is twelve miles, is 1s 3d.

33138 Therefore, they take it from Coleraine to Belfast for 3d?—Yes, and they charge 1s from Bally-

gowan to Coleraine, and, owing to the new way of sending the stone, they need thousands of tons, and it is the interest of the contractor, as a great many instances, and I think in the interests of the ratepayers, that this stone should be sent by rail.

33139 I take it you would say that, for the benefit of the district, the railway company should give such rates that the stones would be brought down by the Guardians and the Rural District, by rail, rather than carting them?—Carrying them over the road. We want a uniform rate in proportion.

33140 You want rather a sort of mileage rate?—Yes. I will give another instance. Stone from Newtownards to Belfast is 1s 3d, and by the through rate to Holywood, a distance of four miles from Belfast it is 2s 2d.

33141 That is 11d for four miles?—Yes, for four miles. Now, this company will carry stone from Newtownards, a distance of 3½ miles, for 2s.

33142 Then, you do not agree with Colonel Crawford, that the charges are fair and reasonable?—I do not, certainly. We will be able to show you that there are better rates into Belfast for stone than we are competing against.

33143 You speak about a through rate. Is that to Holywood?—That is a through rate.

33144 Not with another railway company?—No, with itself. We would contend for a through rate, especially over the Central, to get on the Great Northern Railway.

33145 You say anything to say about it?—They charge sevenpence per ton—the Central charges sevenpence a ton for carrying road metal over it. It can actually be carried by the contractor, Gull, of Newtownards, for eightpence, so the railway certainly does not share there.

33146 You mean the Central Railway Company, who have to loading or anything to do, charge sevenpence for going over a distance of what?—I am not sure of the distance.

33147 1½ miles?—Something like that.

33148 You think it is exorbitant?—It is ridiculous, when you can actually draw it for eightpence.

33149 Has that charge been increased lately, or

was it always that?—I think it was always that. It was reduced a penny I think.

33144a. Have you anything to say about the stones carried for the tramway line from Craigantlet?—There is another little matter I would like to point out.

Mr. Gasker Barrington, Solr.—The rate to Holywood is 2s. not 2s. 2d. The witness inadvertently made a mistake.

33146. Lord Pirrie.—From where?—Mr. Moore (Manager, B and C.D. Railway)—From Newtownards to Holywood.

33148a. Lord Pirrie.—I thought it was Ballygowan?

Mr. Moore.—No, Newtownards and Holywood.

33150. Colonel Hutchinson P.C.—The through rate?

Mr. Moore.—Yes, the through rate is 2s. not 2s. 2d.

33152a. Mr. Jernoch.—Do not call it a through

rate, it is a local rate.

33154. Lord Pirrie.—It was originally a through

rate. The Holywood was a separate line.

Witness.—How long is it reduced?

Mr. Moore.—Upon the application of the trader,

Misses Gill, several months ago.

33156a. Lord Pirrie.—Is it in the rate book?

Mr. Moore.—Yes, some months ago.

33158. Lord Pirrie.—Then it is satisfactory?—It is

satisfactory, but these others had to pay. It was

another contractor who connected for stone—a large

quantity of screenings at the barracks of Holywood.

He had to pay the 2s. 2d. rate.

33162a. While the barracks was being built they had

to pay 2s. 2d.—No. That was only a year ago. It

was screenings for the foot walls.

33163. It was a Government contract, and therefore

the Government was paying?—Yes.

33165a. It would not make much matter what they

paid. Is that it?—We wish to point out, in regard

to that, also, that the rate from Newtownards is

1s. 3d., and from a siding it is 1s. 1d., which is only

half a mile distant, and yet there is 2d. additional

charged. The siding is about half a mile from New-

townards Station, and yet there is 1s. 1d. from

Scotby, and 1s. 3d. from Newtownards—2d. for half

a mile. We believe that is excessive.

33167. You, broadly, think that these little changes

prevent the railway company getting more traffic?—

Certainly.

33169. We will come to the question of Craigantlet?

—Before that I wish to point out that the rate from

Whitehead, a distance of fifteen miles, to Belfast,

is 1s., and from Donaghadee, a distance of thirty-six

miles, is 1s. 9d.

33171. We are now speaking of another railway.

You think the people of County Antrim have a

greater advantage?—Better facilities than we have.

33173. That is, an English railway that has come

to Ireland, gives greater facilities than the local one?

—Yes. I have a letter, I may say, here—

33175. Have not they always been celebrated for

cheap rates on that line—the Northern Counties?—

I understand that they have.

33177. Therefore we had better deal with your own

line?—I think we ought to have equal facilities with

County Antrim, and the railway ought to give them.

Here is a letter written in 1886 by the late Mr. Gill,

on the same subject, and it was written to a share-

holder, and he divides in that letter—"I claim that

the rate from Whitehead to Belfast is 1s." and he

says the rate is excessive to Newtownards.

Mr. Gasker Barrington, Solr.—I am prepared to say

that there is only one terminal in the Whitehead

rate, because it runs into a private siding. He

makes the comparison as if it was too low, but the

reason is that there is a siding.

33180. Lord Pirrie.—That would not get the traffic

if it was not lower.

33181. Mr. Scobee.—The difference in the rates for

conveyance is not so much as it appears to be?—I

believe if you contrast the rates with the rate from

Newcastle and Dundrum for sand you will see there is

no uniformity of rate, and there is no employment

given for sand, whereas in road metal there is employ-

ment given.

33182. Lord Pirrie.—I take it from your general

evidence, that you consider road metal in County

Down is so good that the railway company can

charge whatever it likes?—It is so good that the

railway company is using it for ballast over the

entire line.

33163. Come to the next point. Take that ques-
tion of Craigantlet. Does that come by traction en-
gine or by railway?—During the sinking of the Belfast
City Cemetery and the sinking of the Belfast line
for the electric system, there was a big lot of stones
taken from this with a little ordinary five-ton lorry,
and broke completely—ruined—part of the road,
especially about a mile or so of a small road that
ran in from the main road into the quarry, and
there is about £500 spent on that road.

33164. Was that by the traction engine?—Certi-
tainly.

33165. And did the traction engine take the stones
direct to the quarry?—To Belfast, and I may state
that the road was so bad that the farmers could not
market top loads—straw and hay.

33166. Were not you partly to blame for not keep-
ing the roads in order?—It had to run the usual
course. You see this was traffic—

33167. When the road was in bad order, is not it
your duty to get it put in good order?—It is the
County Council's.

* 33168. You complain that the railway company
do not give low rates to increase the traffic by rail-
way instead of by traction engine?—Yes.

33169. We will leave it there. You have already
told us of the sand from Dundrum. You consider
that the stone traffic should be on the same rates as
for the sand traffic?—Certainly.

33170. That is what you recommend. You men-
tioned an important question which, I think, affects
the welfare of Newtownards and your own district—
coal. What have you got to complain of about coal
—the rates for coal?—Coal is landed at three points—
Belfast, thirteen miles distant, cost of carriage being
1s. 3d. a ton, or about 1½d. per ton per mile; Donaghadee,
eight miles distant, cost of carriage
is 1d. a ton, which works out at 2d. per ton per
mile for the one and 1½d. for the other.

33171. Are these the rates for the ordinary five-
ton lot or is that the rate with the rebate? Does
the rebate still exist in Newtownards for coal traffic?

—It would be for a quantity.

33172. Does the rebate still exist for Newtownards?

—I am not aware. I understand it is the ordinary

rate.

33173. On the rate to Newtownards for 10,000 tons

he got so much, on 40,000 tons he got it so much

less?—I am not aware of it.

33174. Is that not in the rate-book?—The traders

did not mention it to me.

33175. I do not know whether Mr. Barrington would

like to answer whether the rates down here are the

ordinary rates for five-ton lots, or the rate for large

quantities which, some years ago, they gave to

Donaghadee if they brought the coal into

Donaghadee. If they brought in the coal to

Donaghadee they gave a certain rebate.

Mr. Moore.—That was all stopped when the Rail-

way and Canal Traffic Act came into operation—when

the revised rates came into operation in 1888.

Mr. Gasker Barrington, Solr.—The Act was 1888,

and applied from 1882.

Mr. Moore.—There has been no rebate given on

our line to anyone.

33176. Lord Pirrie.—There was a rebate given to

encourage traffic from Donaghadee?—We do not do

anything of the kind now.

33177. Mr. Jernoch.—Are there no rates for large

quantities than these?—Not for coal traffic. Of

course we have ten-ton lots for grain stuff.

33178. Lord Pirrie.—You had, on that line, some

years ago, a special rebate when there was a quan-

tity—25,000, 50,000, and 40,000 tons—especially

given for the benefit of Newtownards manufacturers.

Mr. Moore.—We never give any now.

33179a. Lord Pirrie.—I only want to get the rate.

Mr. Moore.—I wish to point out—

Witness.—Donaghadee is a free port, and neither

Bangor nor Belfast is free, consequently a manufac-

turer in Newtownards, from an economic point of

view, should take the coal supply from Donaghadee.

Why, then, is the rate 2d. per ton, whereas Belfast

is only 1½d. per ton per mile.

33179. Lord Pirrie.—You have the two terminals

in both rates?—The cost of potatoes from Donaghadee

to Belfast, for five-ton lots, is 2s. 6d., and from

Newtownards to Belfast it is 2s., and therefore the

cost from Donaghadee to Newtownards should be 6d.

per ton.

Oct. 23, 1907.

Mr. Julius
M. Gossell,
Representative
of the
Newtownards
Board of
Guardians
and Rural
District
Council.

Stone traffic
conveyed by
road traction
owing to high
railway rates.

Complaint as
to the rate for
coal from
Donaghadee
to Belfast.

The rebate
given for
large consign-
ments of coal
between
Donaghadee
and Newtown-
ards previous
to 1888.

Complaint as
to excessive
potato rates.

Oct 24, 1907.

Mr. Julius
McConnell,
Representative
of the
Newtownards
Board of
Guardians
and Rural
District
Council.

Coal from
Bangor to
Newtownards
carried by
road owing
to high rail
way rates.

Suggested
reduction in
the coal rate
Donaghadee
to Newtownards.

Complaints
to the rate
for manure
Belfast to
Greenisport-road.

The traffic
carried by
road as a
cheaper rate.

Injury caused
to road by
traction en-
gines employed
in the work.

33180. Should be. That is, we should like it to be 1—Should be 5d. Why then is coal charged 1s. 5d per ton?

33181. That is what you would like to see it?—There is one thing with regard to this I would like to point out. Whereas we are situated four miles from Bangor, and it is not a free port, there are, at least, fifteen or twenty houses drawing coal from Bangor to Newtownards every day, and fifteen, there is a Newtownards coal merchant who has horses and who draws not only to Newtownards but to Comber.

33182. All your evidence goes to show that the carriage by railway in County Down is very great compared with the road?—It goes to show that the railway company, if they were doing their duty to the people, would be able to beat horse and traction before this time.

33183. We had it in evidence yesterday that of the ordinary goods to Newtownards—grocery goods, meal and flour—70 per cent. goes by cart, but we understood that the greater part of the coal for Newtownards came by rail. Your evidence to-day is that large quantities come direct from Bangor by cart?—At least fifteen or twenty horses are drawing every day.

33184. Now you say that half goes by cart?—I would not.

33185. Say, a third or a fourth?—A third or a fourth.

33186. Mr. Sexton.—Is it your point that the railway company discriminates against Donaghadee, and deprives Newtownards of the advantage of that port?—We hold that they discriminate against the local coal merchant. If they were Belfast and Bangor merchants would not be able to compete with Newtownards.

33187. They are depriving you of the advantage you ought to have of having a free port in Donaghadee?—The free port of Donaghadee.

33188. Lord Pirie.—In the old days, some years ago, they gave a special rebate on the traffic from Donaghadee, for the sake of assisting the Newtownards manufacturer and you think this should be continued?—We do.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—It would be illegal—an undue preference.

33189. Lord Pirie.—Now, take this question of artificial manures. Have you anything special to say about it?—The cost of carriage from Belfast to Greenisport-road was found to be prohibitive. I am speaking of the rate to Newtownards is 2s. 6d per ton, whereas the rate to Donaghadee is 2s. 5d a ton, for four miles further, to Greenisport-road is nearly five miles nearer, and the rate is 3s. 4d.

33190. That is only 3d a ton for three miles?—They charge 3d more; but they take it to Donaghadee cheaper than to Newtownards.

33191. Donaghadee is a wharf, and it has sea traffic?—Yes; but we hold the railway company should do something to Greenisport-road.

33192. You take the view of nearly all the other witnesses, that, even where there is sea competition, inland places should not pay more than the ports?—Certainly.

33193. Mr. Sexton.—That the difference is too great?—The difference is too great. It is simply ridiculous. There is one agent who buys horse manure, and he has some shipped at his own household, at Newtownards, and the same manure, shipped to Donaghadee, is not at all ridiculous that the staff sent to Donaghadee is 3d a ton cheaper?

33194. Lord Pirie.—I agree there is a great deal in that, but then it is due to competition by sea. Have you anything to say as regards the rate for coal?—There is another thing. He can have them delivered by traction engines at about 1s. 3d a ton cheaper than by rail.

33195. Mr. Aswerth.—From Belfast?—Yes.

33196. Lord Pirie.—Well, he has it that way. All you complain of is the railway company not meeting the farmers?—That is it.

33197. You cannot put it stronger than you have done?—The traction engine delivers it at 1s. 3d a ton less—1s. collection, 1s. delivery, works out at 4s. 6d.

33198. Mr. Aswerth.—Let us get it right on the notice 4s. 6d is the total railway rate?—The total railway rate, whereas the traction engine will collect and deliver it to the farmer at 3s.

33199. Lord Pirie.—You do not complain of the traction rate?—We complain of the engine raising the roads.

33200. Your view is to get the traction engine of the road?—Yes; especially the little district roads. The main roads are not so bad.

33201. Mr. Aswerth.—For the intercity?—For the intercity.

33202. Mr. Sexton.—You prefer to send by rail?—Yes.

33203. Lord Pirie.—We will leave it. You have made it clear. Take cattle traffic. Have you anything to say with regard to cattle?—We believe the rates are excessive.

33204. Have they been raised?—Yes.

33205. Lately?—Yes.

33206. Has your Council protested?—No.

33207. Have the farmers protested?—Sure there is no use in protesting against a railway company.

33208. You have heard from Mr. Aswerth that the railway companies cannot raise the rates without justifying the increase before the permanent Railway Commission if the farmers object. Have you taken any exception to their raising the rates?—We have made several overtures in days gone by.

33209. You have not taken exception to them?—Not collectively, but individually we have.

33210. Have you the rates from Comber?—From Newtownards, formerly a wagon, for eight or nine cattle, cost 2s. from Newtownards.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—To where?—Belfast.

33211. When was that?—Within the last few years. That has been raised to 18s. per wagon.

33212. Lord Pirie.—That is what you complain of?—Yes.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Could he give us the date—was it before the scale was altered?—(Witness.)—I am sorry I cannot; but a gentleman that was in the habit of shipping for years brought this matter before me. (To Mr. Barrington.)

33213. Lord Pirie.—You could easily look it up. You know whether you have raised them.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—My information is that they have not been raised. It may be that the scale was revised in 1888. I negotiated with Mr. Field, and Mr. Telford and Mr. Robinson.

33214. Lord Pirie.—He says the rate was raised.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—When was it?—(Witness.)—We say formerly.

"Formerly" is vague?—(Witness.)—We complain that half a wagon costs 7s., and the cost for one animal is 4s. 5d.—eight cattle for 5s. and one for 4s. 5d.—it is certainly not for the benefit of the small farmer.

33215. Lord Pirie.—You think it is injurious?—Yes. And, further, in regard to sheep—50 sheep may be shipped in a wagon, costing 12s., but only fifteen sheep are allowed in a half wagon, at a cost of 7s.

33216. What is that?—Only fifteen sheep are allowed in the half wagon.

33217. I think you must be wrong in that?—Why?

33218. If a whole wagon carries fifty?—That is my information.

Mr. Moore.—At certain periods of the year twenty are allowed for half a wagon.

33219. Lord Pirie.—If you allow fifty in the whole wagon why could not you allow twenty-five in the half wagon?

Mr. Moore.—We follow the same practice as all other railways.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—I am informed fifty sheep could not get into a wagon.

33220. Lord Pirie.—They could not?—Fifty horned sheep can be put in a wagon—Scottish sheep.

33221. He says fifty sheep are allowed to go, if you can get them in; and if they cannot—

Mr. Moore.—We would not be allowed. We would be prosecuted by the Department of Agriculture if we did.

33222. Mr. Sexton (to Witness).—Do you pattern in?—I believe it is true. That is my information, especially Scotch sheep.

33223. Mr. Aswerth.—You are not in the trade yourself?—No.

33224. Lord Pirie.—I think we will pass over the sheep, because the other portion of the evidence is strong enough. You have got some complaints about farmers and cattle dealers. If you answer my questions you will get on more quickly. Have you any complaints as to facilities for farmers and cattle dealers?—Yes. We complain that the train for the fat cattle market leaves Newtownards too early. They have to be at the station at seven o'clock, and

they do not arrive at the beach in Belfast until eleven o'clock. They are run off at Comber for other cattle, and the market does not start till twelve o'clock.

33225. You think, for the business of the farmers, a train an hour or so later would be better. Have you enough cattle to make up a special train from Newtownards to Belfast?—If they were raised for; but the majority of the cattle go by road.

33226. If they were raised for, and could have gone later?—Yes.

33227. Have you any complaint about horses?—We have a further complaint about the fat cattle in Belfast. We have only two trains there—the mid-day train, and the market starts at twelve o'clock, and the train leaves at 1.40, and, consequently, unless they are brought early we could not have them sent by rail, and at certain seasons of the year it is compulsory to have them brought by rail from the fact that they will not stand driving.

33228. You think a train is wanted?—It would be beneficial to the district for fast cattle to Newtownards.

33229. Mr. Akerth.—Were not we told that there was a 3.30 train by which cattle were allowed to go?

Mr. Moore.—The 3.30.

33230. Mr. Akerth.—And they were allowed whenever they wanted?

Mr. Moore.—That is so.

Witness.—Butchers in Newtownards certainly do not know of it. It is a recent business.

33231. Lord Pirrie.—Are there passenger trains?

Mr. Moore.—Yes.

33232. Lord Pirrie.—How many wagons can you take?

Mr. Moore.—We are not limited.

33233. Lord Pirrie.—So long as the farmers give notice the wagons are wanted?

Mr. Moore.—They need not give notice. If they come to the cattle bank they will get loaded up.

33234. Lord Pirrie.—That covers Belfast?—Farmers and cattle dealers complain of the service for conveying cattle from Newtownards to farm—Saintfield, Ballynahinch, and Crossgar. These are three of the most important farms we have. We complain that formerly we had practically no delay—cattle were taken by the passenger train. Now they are taken to Comber and unloaded at Comber, I think for the purpose of collecting empty wagons.

33235. But do you mean to say that these farms that a few years ago were properly raised for are not being raised for to-day the way they were?—No.

33236. That is your contention?—Yes.

33237. You are only giving evidence from the complaints of the butchers and cattle dealers to the Rural Council or the Society?—Yes, from the cattle dealers and farmers. You see, Newtownards is an important centre at the head of the peninsula, consequently all the cattle brought in the Ards come to Newtownards, and there were three very good farms when English and Scotch buyers came over. Formerly the cattle were taken direct from Newtownards.

33238. To whom have you complained? Have you complained as a Council to the company?—We have not.

33239. You merely bring it forward before the Commission?—I understood that these men have complained.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—Would you ask some particulars of the complaints? I am informed there is no change of service. He is only informed that there are complaints. If he would tell us the particular train service—I am told there is no alteration?—(Witness.)—The complaint is simply this—that cattle were formerly taken by passenger train from Newtownards, along with the dealers, and loaded at Ballynahinch with the passenger train, and now they are not. They are left off at Comber for the purpose of collecting empty wagons and taken on to Ballynahinch, and they do not arrive at Ballynahinch for an hour and shall after the passengers.

33240. Lord Pirrie.—Have you suffered that yourself?—There is no question but it is absolutely true.

33241. You have seen it?—I would be wrong in stating I saw it. I know a great many instances where the sale of cattle is blocked—where the platform is blocked with cattle to be re-shipped when the train arrives.

33242. Do you want to say anything, Mr. Barrington?

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—Yes. I want you to hear Mr. Moore.

Mr. Moore.—There has been absolutely no change in the working of the cattle for the past twenty years. Witness.—Past twenty years. Do you say—

33243. Lord Pirrie.—I don't want an argument. He denies it, and we must have evidence of some sort?—There is no doubt cattle are left off, and they collect the wagons at intervening stations for these three farms, and in some instances the horses have been knocked off the cattle with the rough usage.

33244. Mr. Serles.—Are we to understand that there has been no change?

Mr. Moore.—Speaking for myself, during the past twenty years there has been absolutely no change. There is a special cattle train goes out of Belfast in advance of the 7.30 passenger train. It draws up at Comber and waits for the passenger train. The cattle are transferred from the Newtownards train to the cattle train, which follows to the fair.

33245. Lord Pirrie.—He says the cattle went with the dealers.

Mr. Moore.—That is not correct.

Witness.—I believe our Newtownards cattle went direct with the Newtownards train.

33246. Lord Pirrie.—You can find out. Have you anything to say about the horse traffic?—We complain principally about the treatment in the Central Railway when they are carried to the Dublin Show.

33247. This is an excuse charged on the Central Railway, which is interfering with the traffic?—Very materially, both in regard to the Dublin and the North-East shows.

33248. I will take you on a little. That Central Railway is an expensive item for all traffic which has to come over the Great Northern Railway system. Can you send cattle through to the Northern Counties Line by the connection over the quay?—By the Central is the only way we have any connection.

33249. The traffic does not go from County Down to County Antrim?—Oh, no. Over the Central to the Great Northern.

33250. Although the line is there you are not allowed to use it. You do not know?

33251. Mr. Serles.—Do people find it cheaper to send from Newtownards to Cross and back again via Holyhead to Dublin than to send direct to Dublin via Duncannon? I think the rate is £1 6s. and something to Cross, I forget how many miles; and the distance to Dublin is ninety miles.

33252. Lord Pirrie.—Have you any invoices of that?—No.

33253. Mr. Akerth.—Can you tell the rate from Newtownards to Cross?

Mr. Moore.—We have no through rate.

33254. Mr. Akerth.—Can this gentleman tell us what it would cost from Newtownards to Cross and from Cross to Dublin?

33255. Lord Pirrie.—He is only giving information supplied by others.

33256. Lord Pirrie.—What about the rate for horses?—We complain of 38s. 6d., the rate on horses.

33257. You only think that?—It is correct.

33258. Have you any invoice?—There's no question about it.

33259. That is your rate?—There is no question, that is the rate from Newtownards to Dublin—38s. 6d. We contend that as seven-tenths of the horses are sold in Dublin and don't return, that it should be a cheaper rate.

33260. Lord Pirrie.—I understand.

33261. Mr. Serles.—That is a clear point.

33262. Lord Pirrie.—Have the Guardians any complaint about parcels?—Yes, we think the rate is excessive with regard to parcels.

33263. Are you speaking of the County Down, or of the through traffic?—Principally of the County Down and Belfast.

33264. Let us take Bristol?—One of the Guardians received a parcel from Bristol some time ago. It cost 6d., and it took an additional 6d. to deliver from Belfast to Comber. A small parcel costs 2d. to collect and 2d. to deliver; that is as much as the cartage itself. The carriers in Newtownards will collect and deliver and carry for 2d.

33265. You object to the cost of delivery?—Yes.

33266. You think that added to the cost of cartage is some excessive?—Yes.

33267. You consider the cost of the parcels earned by the railway excessive. Well, now, what about the

Oct. 22, 1907

Mr. John McConnel, Representative of the Newtownards Board of Guardians and Rural District Council.

The County Down Company's explanation of the cattle train arrangements on the Co. Down line.

Complaint as to the excessive rate for horses Newtownards to Dublin.

And as to the charge on parcels between County Down stations and Belfast.

Oct. 22, 1897.

Mr. John
McConnell,
Representative
of the
Newtownards
Board of
Guardians
and Rural
District
Council.

Complaints
as to the variety
of passenger
fares with
special con-
ditions of
travel.

Suggesting
as to the issue
of workmen's
tickets on the
Co. Down
Railway.

Inferiority of
the carriage-
rate on the
workmen's
trains.

Complaints as
to the New-
townards
train service.

Excessive
subscription
ticket rates
between New-
townards and
Belfast.

passenger fares?—They give rise to great dissatisfaction and are a great means of making Newtownards unpopular. There's too great a variety of fares; there are too many different fares; I could not tell you how many different fares there are; on one or two different days there are four different fares.

33262. You would rather have an average price for the day—say 1s. 3d. all round. You would rather pay that?—Yes.

33263. Mr. Sexton.—You would not rather pay 1s. 3d. all round than pay a lower figure.

Witness.—In the morning trains, and running up to midday, it is 1s. 3d.; after midday they charge 1s. 6d.; that is ridiculous.

33264. Lord Ferns.—You would prefer an average rate to the present system?—Yes, I think a reasonable average rate would be beneficial.

33265. Well, what do you say about workmen's trains; have you a satisfactory workmen's train in the morning?—We have a workmen's train from Newtownards, but it would have been a far bigger benefit if some of the workmen's grievances had been remedied long ago. Recently the railway company occupied part of the way. If a man missed the workmen's train he had to pay workmen's additional. The railway company, since this Commission set, reduced that, so that the Commission has done some good. But I think it is a case of locking the stable after the horse has been stolen. There are great complaints as to the workmen's trains. If there is a day off, or holidays in the island in the middle of the week, the railway company charges the full workmen's tickets.

33266. You would like the men to buy a book of tickets, and use the tickets whenever they want to go?—Yes.

33267. That would be satisfactory?—Yes; and then they cannot procure tickets on Monday morning, they can only procure them on Saturday night, or Sunday morning; they can't procure tickets on Monday morning. A man might want to go up to look for a job, and it would be necessary for him to go up early, and he would have to pay 1s. 6d., and they would not refund this, and they would take out the Monday ticket into the bargain—that is 1s. 9d. for the journey.

33268. If they could buy a book during the week for the following week it would be satisfactory?—Yes. Another thing is, the carriages in these trains are of an obsolete type, practically the carriages are like big open vans, and they are very cold for the workmen, and these things make them most unpopular, and it is not as cheap as Limerick, where they have a 2s. 6d. fare.

33269. The Great Northern Company gives the workmen better facilities than yours?—Yes, and they don't charge if they miss the train.

33270. Have you any complaint to make as regards the third-class carriages for the ordinary traffic?—The third-class carriages are recently much improved.

33271. You have no real complaint, are they all satisfied?—Yes; but, if it hadn't been for the Great Northern going into Newcastle we might not have had cushioned carriages on the County Down jet.

33272. You believe in competition?—Yes, we believe in competition; it may have brought about the improvement in the third class.

33273. You are satisfied that the train service is ample for your requirements?—No, we are not satisfied with the train service, especially to Newtownards, but I must say that they have improved it; but there is a lot to be done. The trains are very slow on this line. If they give us a service like what they do to Bangor it would be advantageous.

33274. You are such a shivering town that you want a quicker service?—It would tend to popularise it especially; a better train service would popularise Newtownards—a service such as they have to Limerick.

33275. Have you anything to say about subscription tickets?—Yes; they charge 2s. 6d. Newtownards to Belfast, that is second.

33276. Does not that compare favourably with other lines?—No; not that way are treated, and the way the Donaghadee people are treated, on the same line. Their ticket is 3s., or 3s. 6d.; that is only 3s. 6d. the Donaghadee people pay between that and

Newtownards, which is eight miles; and we are charged 8s. for a distance of five miles, between Newtownards and Comber, compared with Bangor, where the charge for a second class ticket is 10s.

33277. Do you think a reduction of rates would increase the traffic?—I think nothing would be so beneficial to Newtownards and the railway company as third class subscription tickets would be to Newtownards. They issue no monthly subscription tickets third class from Newtownards. On the Midland they do. And there is another matter—the difference in the monthly subscription tickets. The difference between the monthly subscription tickets to Newtownards and to Donaghadee is only 3s. 6d., whereas the monthly subscription ticket between Newtownards and Donaghadee is 10s.

33278. You complain of that?—Yes.

33279. And also that there are not third-class subscription tickets on other lines to Belfast?—Yes.

33280. About the excursion traffic—you are satisfied with that?—Well, no, unfortunately, our working classes have not been catered for in regard to excursions. Formerly excursions were in the afternoon, and were most suited to the learned classes than to the workers. We ask that excursion tickets should be issued two or three days in the week, after six or seven o'clock, to Donaghadee, with fares something like what they have in Ballymena, for the working classes, to suit them in the evenings.

33281. You think that would be beneficial to the railway company, and to your people in Newtownards district?—Yes. Then, there is another matter. The third class return from Newtownards to Kilmore costs 2s. 6d., and if you take a return ticket to Donaghadee it is 1s. 6d., and the return to Kilmore is 7d.

33282. You mean you get the two tickets cheaper than the one?—Yes.

33283. That is a common system. For instance, going to London, by giving a single to Liverpool, and another on, it is cheaper than a through ticket. Travellers don't realise this until after they make the mistake.

33284. You think the two return tickets should not be cheaper?—No. In the one case company districts are badly dealt with; Belfast gets a preference; you get better treatment from Belfast than from country stations.

33285. Your district feels that Newtownards should be put on the same footing?—Yes; that there should be equal rights all round.

33286. What do you say with regard to Sunday trains?—This is another thing which is most in excess to Newtownards. This is about the only day that the working classes have time to visit, and a lot of people in Newtownards have friends in Belfast and a lot of people in Belfast have friends in Newtownards, and Newtownards is rendered most unpopular. There's no way of getting out of it. There's a train in the morning at 8.55, and none until six o'clock at night.

33287. I need not ask you anything about the cheap goods; we have had that fully yesterday, and the evidence was from a man who is actually one of the people in the trade in Newtownards. I will now ask Mr. Sexton to go on with his examination.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

33288. Mr. McConnell has given his evidence in such detail that I shall only ask a question on one particular point. You say you have splendid quarries of blue stone, for building and other purposes?—Yes.

33289. Are there other mineral resources in the district?—There's free stone at Scrabo, and blue stone for road metal.

33290. Generally the resources of Ireland in building stone are abundant and excellent?—Yes.

33291. Do you know that the export of stone from Ireland last year, or 1905, was only £20,000, of which half went from Newry. Do you export any of this stone?—No; we don't get proper facilities, or we might have far more stone sent by Belfast.

33292. Whilst only £20,000 worth of all sorts of stone is exported from this country, there is every year unworked stone, including building stone, to the value of £250,000. Would you say that the railways might arrange a system of rates for this industry so as to develop the trade in Ireland, in view of the

large imports of stone?—Certainly, in free-stone from Roske to Comber it is practically prohibitive.

33393. We have abundance of excellent stone in Ireland, and yet we import great quantities of stone, and the only explanation is that the inland rates are so high that the local stone cannot be used?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. Anewaters.

33394. You mentioned the Belfast Central Railway as $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long?

33394a. Lord Ferris. I did.

Witness.—Yes.

33396. Mr. Anewaters.—Do you know that the Act of Parliament makes it $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. The Act of Parliament specially provides that on that railway all the rates may be charged as if it was $\frac{1}{2}$ mile?—I am not aware of that.

33396a. A bonus mileage makes it six miles longer than it is.

Mr. Charles Harrington, Solicitor.—Sir.

33396. Mr. Anewaters.—Parliament was satisfied that there was a justification for charging on that line rates much higher than ordinary rates on other lines?—Well, it is most injurious, especially to the North-East Show in Belfast. There are great complaints of the charge from County Down to Balmoral Show, and again to Dublin Show they complain.

33397. I don't doubt Newtownards would like to have the rates lower, but I want to know the particular fact about the railway where you said the rates are higher. You spoke of a rate of 4s. 9d. for artificers, and you said that was such a high rate that the railway company did not get the traffic and it went by traction engine?—Yes.

33398. If it paid them to take it by railway, the railway company would rather take it than not?—Certainly.

33399. And if it did not pay them, they would rather not?—Yes.

33400. Well, here is the manager, according to you he sees the traffic going by road, and if he chose to come to 3s. he could get it by rail; supposing he thinks it is better not to have it at 3s., would you make him come down to that?—Donaghadee should not get a preference.

33401. Never mind that?—A 2s. 9d. rate to Greenacree road station, and a 2s. 6d. rate for four miles further.

33402. Supposing that rather than take 3s. including collection and delivery, he prefers the traffic to go by road, would you force him to take it?—I don't like the word compulsion, but I really think it would take very little to make the difference to get the farmers to go to them. The railways don't put out a fooler to ascertain what would be a popular price acceptable to farmers. If the railways in this district would give a cheaper rate on the whole they could largely increase their farm produce over the line. There would spring up in Belfast wholesale produce merchants who would handle the produce on commission, and that would be advantageous to the country districts.

33403. Is all the land in the neighbourhood of Newtownards cultivated already?—Yes; there is a good deal going into grazing, but it is twelve miles by road to Belfast, and at that distance, from a large centre like Belfast, it would be to the farmer's advantage to send by rail.

33404. Supposing the railway companies don't agree, and rather than reduce the rate they would like to be without the traffic, and would let it stop on the roads, what would you do? They may be wise, but it is their business to manage?—We would have to look for a new system and find a remedy.

33405. You think the passenger fares are high; have you got that correctly the 2s. 6d., 1s. 11d., and 1s. 6d. that is a return fare?—Yes.

33406. Do you think thirty-two pence first class for twenty-five miles high?—We certainly do.

33407. Do you think 1s. 6d. third class for twenty-five miles high?—Certainly.

33408. Can you mention any important line anywhere in the United Kingdom where it is lower?—After we travel five miles we are just as near Belfast as when we are at home.

33409. The railway company had to build that line?—It is to our disadvantage to be taken to Comber to send traffic on the other line.

33410. The company has to work it; it doesn't

matter to the company how far it may be in a line?—We are only five miles from the city boundary by electric tramway.

33411. Can you suggest any company in Great Britain that charges lower fares than the County Down?—For example we can.

33412. I don't mean excursions, but for ordinary passenger fares?—I don't know.

33413. Isn't it rather hard, when you have the lowest in the country—isn't it rather hard to complain?—Not in our case; we are justified in complaining; we are not treated equally with Bangor; look at the difference between Bangor and Newtownards.

33414. Lord Ferris.—You complain that Newtownards is not treated like the other parts of the line?—We are not treated equally.

33414a. Mr. Anewaters.—The statement was that the fares were high.

33415. Lord Ferris.—Compared with other portions of the line.

33415a. Mr. Anewaters.—I am quite willing that the witness should state what he likes. There is a place on the line where they are still lower. But, compared with all other places in Ireland, except Bangor—they are very low?—Yes.

33416. Is that a fair way to put it?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON PEA.

33417. With regard to the question of high rates for your building and paving works, I gather that you get lower rates on the Northern Counties than on the Belfast and County Down?—Yes.

33418. With regard to the road material from Whitehead and Torrington Bridge to Belfast, it works out on the Northern Counties at under a halfpenny a mile, and Belfast and County Down, three farthings. If it pays the Northern Counties to carry at a rate of less than a halfpenny, you think it ought to pay the County Down to change the same?—It puts our contractors in a most unfair position.

33419. In reference to Mr. Sexton's figures about building stone, I see that sets alone were imported last year to the extent of 36,000 tons and a value of £45,000, actually imported into the country, where, according to you, you have sets with which, if given a suitable reduction, you would probably supply all demands—so that so?—Yes, but especially in road metal.

33420. You spoke of sets particularly?—Yes.

33421. As to fares generally, you re-affirm the evidence we have had from other witnesses, that Donaghadee is placed at a disadvantage with regard to Bangor?—Yes.

33422. And that Donaghadee on its own merits is really quite entitled to get as good treatment as Bangor?—We are worse treated than Donaghadee; the inland towns were very badly treated; look at the contrast between Bangor and Newtownards.

33423. Does the system of charging a higher fare in the afternoon prevail on other lines?—Not that I know of.

33424. It is simply confined to Belfast and County Down?—Yes.

33425. With regard to the workmen's fares, is that from Newtownards to Belfast?—Yes.

33426. It is 2s. a week?—Yes.

33427. Workmen can go ten miles to and fro for 1s a week in Belgium?—They have that in Scotland, I understand—in Glasgow.

33428. Is there a large amount of workmen passing traffic in your district?—Yes. I might state the object of the workmen's trade there. The heads of families wherever they could not get employment in Newtownards went to Glasgow and elsewhere, and their families in a great many cases followed them, and there was a loss to our manufactures. We have any amount of employment for boys and girls, so much so that the large weaving companies are advertising through the country, and two or three men are interviewing families to get them to move to Newtownards and pay them for learning spinning and weaving. One of our hand-stitching factories had to extend, and they had to go to Belfast on account of the scarcity of labour. By reducing the third-class fares and giving third-class subscribers' tickets to Newtownards, it would be the means of getting a great lot of the working-class to come to Newtownards, and it would popularise it.

Oct. 21, 1907.

Mr. Julius St. On call. Represents the view of the Newtownards Board of Guardians and Rural District Council.

Complaint as to the fare from Donaghadee to Belfast.

As a statement of the view of the Co. Down Company's rates for stone exceeding those charged on the Northern Counties line.

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Oct. 22, 1897.

Mr. John
McDonnell,
Representative
of the
Newtownards
Board of
Guardians
and Rural
District
Council

Reduced fares
for appren-
tices and the
working
classes ad-
mitted

Mr. J. W.
Dorman,
M.C.S.E.,
Riverside

The present
mode of
connecting
Irish Railways
with English
and foreign
ports and
factories

The Glen-
kilty and its
district are
not in-
volved

Suggestion
as to
improvement
and less
expense pro-
posed in
the statement
of Ballinacree

The cost of
Parlia-
mentary
operation to
be saved

33329. Is that a season ticket you mean?—Subscriber's ticket.

33330. None are issued now on the West?—No, not third-class. In Newtownards we could employ families at as high if not higher rate of wages than in Belfast, and heads of families could work in Belfast, the difference in the home-rent enabling them to live in Newtownards. Another thing that I should like to mention is that special facilities should be given to train apprentices. They should not be charged 3s.

33331. You think that in the interest of the rail-

way companies reduced fares should be given?—For apprentices.

33332. And for the working classes generally?—Yes.

33333. Lord Fermoy.—Did I understand your answer to Colonel Peel to be that you would have more manufactures if you could get people to work them?—Yes.

33334. And that you want inducements to bring the people there?—We have six or eight factories employing from 200 to 400 hands; and another thing that we are proud of is, that more than half of those manufactures have risen from the racks

Mr. J. W. DORMAN, M.C.S.E.,

examined by Lord FERRIER (in the Chair).

33335. You are an engineer?—Yes.

33336. What county do you reside in?—Cork.

33337. Are you in a public position in the County of Cork?—I am not in a public position.

33338. And therefore, the evidence you are going to give is that of a civil engineer living in the county?—Yes.

33339. Are you interested in the railways of the country?—I am, in so far as that I am a considerable shareholder in the Cork and Brandon and the Glenside Extension Railways.

33340. Therefore, you speak, not only as an engineer, but as a shareholder in those companies?—Yes.

33341. Have you thought over the question as to why railways have not been made in some parts of the country, and why they have been made in other parts?—What I want to draw your attention particularly to is this. Take first the case of the Glenside Extension Railway. That is carried over ground, for the first five miles, of comparatively easy gradients, to Ballinacree; but, from that point on to Glenside, on account of the action of the late Mr. Benze Jones, in opposing the line, if it went through his property, we were driven to go over a hill, and, therefore, the cost of the line was much more than it would have been, and the gradients were much heavier. Unnecessary expense had to be incurred, which probably would have been saved had there been some inexpensive tribunal, such as a Board of Trade inquiry, in the first instance, to determine the proper route.

33342. You think that an inexpensive tribunal, to which promoters could apply, would be of great importance?—Of very great importance. It would save thousands of pounds in the original cost of construction.

33343. And you think also that money would be saved in management?—Certainly, and in maintenance, as well as in Parliamentary expenses. The same remarks apply to the Bantley Extension line, where we had to pay £10,000 more for construction than it should have cost, on account of the line having been improperly laid out.

33344. You think the people of the locality should themselves have the power to approve or disapprove of a proposal to construct a line of railway. You would ignore the Imperial Parliament altogether?—I would. The inquiry into the subject should be local. The evidence could be brought forward at a trifling cost, by persons who are interested in the line, but who have not the means to fight the matter out before a Committee of the House of Commons; and, after a certificate was given by the Board of Trade, a Bill for that line, and no other, should be allowed to pass through the Houses of Parliament as an unopposed Bill.

33345. That would enable them to save the cost of Parliamentary opposition?—It would.

33346. And do you propose that all that money should be saved, and that no deposit should be made?—I don't say that we would save the deposit.

33347. You would pay a deposit to the tribunal that would hear the evidence in the district itself?—Yes.

33348. And do you think you would get as fair a decision from a local tribunal—whether that tribunal was in Antrim or in Cork—as you would get from an absolute stranger?—I don't think you would get a fair hearing from any local tribunal. I should prefer the decision of the Board of Trade inspectors.

33349. That is an individual appointed by the Government?—Yes.

33350. And you would not be afraid to leave the welfare of the district in his hands?—I would not

have the slightest objection to leave it to the Board of Trade inspectors.

33351. Have you got any views as regards extension lines of railway?—I mean feeders to the main lines?—Yes. In the County of Cork there is one that should be made—that is, from Glenside to Rosscarbery, a distance of seven miles. The cost of it would be about £35,000. Some years ago we got the county to guarantee the whole amount of the cost of making that line.

33352. And why isn't it made?—Because the Cork and Brandon Company would not work it. We would be obliged to get rolling stock, undertake the management, and other matters, and we thought the thing would not pay under such circumstances.

33353. And the whole thing was dropped because the Brandon Company would not undertake the management of it?—Yes.

33354. Did they make you an offer on some terms that were not possible?—Not to my knowledge.

33355. And why did they refuse to work it?—The reason is that they want to drive the traffic from Rosscarbery and that district to the West—to Skibbereen.

33356. But they would get the traffic in any case?—They would, but they want to drive it away from Cork, to send it to Skibbereen, which is fifty miles from Cork, and the fares fifty per cent. more, instead of its being sent to Glenside, which is only seven miles, and thence to Cork.

33357. And if that line had been made it would have increased the traffic over the Brandon Company's line?—It would.

33358. Mr. Ansell.—Is Rosscarbery between Skibbereen and Glenside?—It is.

33359. Chairman.—The map shows that it is close to Galley Head.

33360. Chairman (to H'Onnors).—Is there any other district that you would like to see developed in that way?—Yes, there is a district in the County of Cork that I was connected with; but perhaps I had better finish with the County of Cork. In that county there is another district in which I think a railway should be made, and that is from Bantley to Glengarriff, and from Glengarriff to Castletown. The last-mentioned place is now an important naval station, and there is a large and increasing tourist traffic to Glengarriff. There is a steamer running on Bantley Bay between Bantley and Glengarriff and Castletown, which has developed the traffic; but still Bantley Bay is rough and wild in winter, and it is not a proper means of conveyance, especially to Castletown. There is no proper landing place at Glengarriff, and no place between Glengarriff and Castletown at which the steamer can call.

33361. Do you think the district would undertake a guarantee on the capital needed for the construction of the railway?—I don't. Because the heavy rate which has had to be levied on the district to pay the guarantee for which it has been pressed has heavily on the ratepayers already to enable a further guarantee to be obtained.

33362. Now, what about the other line, that in the County of Cork?—The County were willing to find the money to make a line from Carrickmacross to Ballinacree. That is a line which if made would develop a fairly heavy general traffic.

33363. Is there any mineral traffic in the district?—No, simply ordinary Irish agricultural traffic. Ballinacree has a good country behind it that wants railway communication.

33363. Would that be like those in the South of Ireland that would not pay more than their working expenses?—I think it would pay more than its working expenses. I think it would pay interest on portion of the capital.

33364. Assuming for a moment that these branch lines are made, have you any idea as to how the railway companies that work them are to be remunerated for working them?—I think, in the case of the Roscommon line it could be worked in connection with the Bandon line at the rate of 24 per mile per week, and if they undertook it at that the County would have guaranteed them the difference between 24 and the actual receipts.

33365. That is what you would call a subsidy?—Yes.

33366. You would make up the balance between the receipts and the working expenses?—Yes.

33367. And you consider that a fair thing to the district which gets the railway?—Yes. They don't mind giving a guarantee if they know what the utmost extent of their liability is to be, but they don't like it otherwise.

33368. Chairman. Besides the guarantee they have to be responsible for any default.

33369. Chairman.—What you want is that there should be a limit to the amount for which they are liable?—Yes. I look upon it in this way. When a railway company gets control of a district from the Government, the Government should look upon them as being to a certain extent responsible for the development of that district, and that they should go beyond looking to the interests of the pockets of the shareholders exclusively.

33370. Would you go so far as to give the railway companies some help towards making these branch lines—some help from the county?—If the county guaranteed the interest on the capital required for making the branches I would not give them anything else, except a certain amount for selling-stock, etc. I would rather give them a lump sum and have nothing more to do with it. For instance, in the case of the Roscommon Railway, my estimate for this is \$35,000, add to that \$5,000 to be handed over to the Bandon Railway Company to enable them to provide additional selling-stock to work it—making a total of \$40,000 to be provided. That money should be provided by the Government and be repaid without interest at the rate of \$200 a year; half by the Bandon Railway Company, and half by the County at the same rate; and after the whole sum has been repaid to the Government the line to become the absolute property of the Bandon Company.

33371. Have you anything to say about the parcel traffic—is it satisfactory?—As far as local traffic is concerned it is satisfactory enough, but if a parcel has to go over several different lines it is not satisfactory.

33372. You mean that the terminals don't work harmoniously together?—They don't. For instance—a parcel sent to me from Nenagh to Kinsale, a distance of about one hundred miles, and it took a fortnight to reach me. On another occasion a parcel forwarded to me from London before Thursday did not reach me until the following Tuesday evening, while if it had been sent by post it would have been delivered, at latest, on Friday evening. Again, I sent a parcel of sugar from Duncannon to Kinsale. It was brought from Duncannon to London, four thousand miles, for 5s., whereas from London to Kinsale, six hundred miles, it cost 12s. 6d. When I was coming from Duncannon I had sixteen tons of baggage. I asked a railway company what the cost of bringing it to Cork would be, and I was told 24 s. ten. I thought that was excessive, so I sent it by omnibus, and it cost only 35s. a ton.

33373. Would you make the railway companies responsible for undue delay in forwarding parcels?—I would penalise them for it. In case of undue delay, say 50 per cent. longer time than by parcels post, each railway should be required, on demand, to give the date on which the parcel was received and forwarded by them, and the consignee or consignor should have a right to a reduction of freight pro rata to the delay. If the time should be three times as long as the time of the parcels post, no freight should be paid, and in the case of perishables, the full value of the goods should be paid, and no freight.

33374. Have you anything to say as regards mail trains?—Yes. The evening up-and-the morning

ing down-mail from Cork to Kinsale are carried between Kinsale and Ballinacorney, a distance of ten miles, by car, owing to the parsimony of the Post Office, which I understand refuses to pay more than \$200 a year for the service. But this matter has been partially remedied within the past six months.

33375. That guarantee has disappeared?—Yes, in a measure.

33376. Have you anything to complain of in regard to fares in your district?—No; we get a return ticket for a journey of twenty-four miles, first-class, for 2s. 6d.

33377. Has anything come under your notice with regard to any want of harmony between the different railways?—In connection with the Cork and Bandon system, there is no end of small railways. There is the Cork and Bandon, the Duncannon branch, the Kinsale branch, the Donaghadee branch, the Glenties branch, the Glen Valley branch, the Skull to Skibbereen line, and the Tundage and Courtmacsherry branch.

33378. You think all these are troublesome to manage?—I do.

33379. Mr. Sturges.—Is that 120 miles of railways, how many different systems are there—how many jurisdictions?—I think there are eight or ten.

33380. Chairman.—How do you propose to get over that—have you any feeling about amalgamation?—I think they should all be amalgamated, and put under the control of the Bandon Company. There are at present seven boards of directors, three managements, and many different interests.

33381. Then all these little lines you would place under the Bandon Company?—I would put them all under it. The Bandon Company is a very go-ahead company, and they had got a first-rate manager. The difficulties, however, are great, and voluntary amalgamation is next to impossible. Each director is afraid that he will not have a seat on the new board, and the heads of departments are afraid of losing their employment on account of it. This causes the value of one line to be run up, and the other to be depressed by each board and their officials, a Board of Trade inquiry, and a personal inspection of the railways would give the most satisfactory results.

33382. If you would put all these under one management what do you say about putting all the railways in Ireland under one management?—The Southern railways are disconnected with the Northerners, and unless they were linked up there would be no use in putting them under one management. I would place all the railways south of Dublin under one management, and those north of Dublin should be amalgamated, and worked as one system. If directors and officials had no interest one way or another most of the lines would be amalgamated.

33383. Would you make the railways of Ireland into two great systems?—I would; I don't think I would make them into one. I am not sure that that would be economical. The method of working of the Northern line is different from that of the Southern ones.

33384. You think they require different consideration?—Yes, in many ways.

33385. As a whole do you consider that it would be better to work the railways as two independent systems under private management, or do you think it would be for the benefit of the people of Ireland if the lines were owned by the Government or by an Irish Council?—My impression is that they would be better managed under private management.

33386. Do you think that these extensions which you so strongly advocate could be made under private management—what funds would you have for extension under private management, except by raising fresh capital?—You must raise fresh capital to make the lines.

33387. But if the lines were made by the State any profit they would make would go for extensions—you would gain in that way?—Yes, but I don't think the State would make a profit.

Examined by Mr. SARGENT.

33388. I do not know that from beginning to end of your statement you have said a word at all about the great question of rates?—I said that on the Cork and Bandon Railway we had nothing to complain of with regard to fares.

Oct 22, 1887.

Mr. J. W. Duncannon, 24, St. James's, Kinsale.

Satisfactory passenger fares in the Kinsale Bandon line.

Suggested the absorption of all the small railways in South West Cork by the Cork Bandon and South Coast Company.

Proposed formation into two trunk systems of all the Irish railways.

The present system of management to be retained.

Fresh capital to be raised for further railway extensions.

Roscommon passenger fares on the Cork and Bandon Railway.

Oct. 22, 1897.

Mr. J. W.

Dunn

Barrington,

Keweenaw,

Keweenaw.

Irish Rail-

way rates

partly ex-

cessive, and

partly mod-

erate.

The general
effect of the
existing
system of
rates on
Irish ag-
riculture.

The tendency
in the colonies
and foreign
countries
generally to
extend the
system of
State own-
ership.

The diffi-
culty in
compelling
generally
owned lines
to amalgamate.

The desir-
ability in
Ireland to
reduce the
present
friction and
dislocation.

33388. But on the general question of railway rates in Ireland—I drew attention to the heavy rate that I was asked to pay for furniture.

33390. You know that the occasion for the appointment of this Commission is the question of the pressure of rates on the public?—Yes.

33391. Have you formed any view on the question?—I think in many cases the rates are excessive, but in other cases they are moderate.

33392. Have you followed the course of the evidence that has been given here?—I have not. I simply noticed in the papers the evidence that concerned ourselves.

33393. But suppose it was clearly shown that the export rates from Ireland, as contrasted with the import rates from foreign countries into Great Britain have hampered and retarded the agricultural output from this country, while the output of other countries to Great Britain expanded, doesn't that constitute a serious case for reform?—Certainly. You should have equal rates to add out. I have given an instance of that inequality when I spoke of the payment of 5s. for carriage over 4,000 miles, and 12s. 6d. for only 600 miles.

33394. The export rates to Ireland have the effect of flooding the country with imported goods, whilst the Irish manufacturer is not able to lift his head—does that condition of things force upon your mind a consideration of the present question as a whole, and the necessity for dealing with it as one question?—Yes.

33395. You are aware of the examples of other countries—I believe you know that it is only in Great Britain and the United States—we may leave out Turkey and Spain—it is only in these two rich and developed countries that the railways are still in private hands, and do not the private lines in these countries cause more trouble at present than all the State-owned lines of the world put together?—I have seen the Inter-Colonial line of Canada, and I would be very sorry to see passenger trains in Ireland worked in the same way. I have seen up to thirty first-class passengers obliged to stand for 2½ hours in a carriage, because they would not put on an extra carriage.

33396. Is not the Canadian Government extending its ownership of railways at the present time?—It is.

33397. Now, here is the general case of the world—there are many countries where there are none but State railways?—Yes.

33398. Does anyone in those countries propose to revert to the system of private ownership?—I could not tell you that, but I don't suppose they do.

33399. Then there are other countries where there are Government railways and also private lines—are you aware that the settled tendency of affairs is to decrease the proportion of private railways and increase the proportion of public railways in those countries?—I think so.

33400. It would appear from this to be the experience of the world that State railways best suit countries in all circumstances. If you amalgamate the Irish railways into two systems, would you compel all the other companies to come in and be absorbed?—I would absorb them all.

33401. Compulsorily?—Yes, compulsorily.

33402. The South Eastern, the Midland, and those two very thriving and independent lines in the North—the County Down and the Northern Counties—I would bring them all in.

33403. Do you not really think that a proposal of that kind would be most tedious, controversial, and costly. Ireland would have a long time to wait for such a settlement?—It would be expensive; there is no doubt about that.

33404. But would it not be met by the utmost resistance of those powerful corporations?—I am certain it would.

33405. Don't you think it would be better to arrive at a settlement of a more peaceful character, if equally effectual for the public interest?—Certainly; but I don't think a peaceful settlement could be effected.

33406. Your two private systems would have open competition for traffic, dislocated service, wasteful competition for traffic—so-called competition, which is of no use to the public?—Of course it would, but the friction and dislocation which exists at present would be reduced.

33407. If you amalgamate the railways into two systems, and make no provision for the reduction of rates, you give a stone to the people who are asking

for bread?—I think the amalgamation would lead to a reduction of rates, because the expense of working would be less. The railway companies would therefore reduce the rates and improve the traffic.

33408. They would if they liked. There is the South Eastern paying no dividend on its ordinary stock, and there is the Great Northern paying 6½—do you perceive any greater disposition on the part of the Great Northern to reduce its rates than on the part of the South Eastern?—I don't know what the rates are on either.

33409. Do you not think that the railways would keep what they could get?—If the lines were amalgamated on terms proportionate to their stocks.

33410. If they were amalgamated the Great Northern, for instance, would wish to keep its profits. I suggest to you that if you amalgamated the railways into two systems, and increased their divisible profits by decreasing their working expenses, you have no assurance that any of those new profits would be used for reduction of rates, nay, I submit that all probability point the other way?—We have got a substantial reduction in the South when it was in the power of the companies to give it to us.

33411. Under a public system of railways the administration could be constrained to apply profits to reduction of rates?—It might be.

33412. Have you thought of this—that if you amalgamated the railways of Ireland into two systems, and allow them to add to their divisible profits by such concentration, you will make the net profit greater, then, in case the country afterwards wished to buy the line, the effect of your amalgamation into two systems would be to greatly run up the price?—It would, certainly.

33413. Isn't it better now to consider whether the country is going to buy the line, rather than by amalgamation to allow lines, by that act of the State, to acquire a value which would run up the price against the public hereafter?—I don't think it would be right for the country to buy railways.

33414. Would not what you propose have the effect, in the event of public purchase hereafter, of inflating the price?—Yes.

33415. You say that voluntary amalgamation is impossible?—Yes.

33416. To carry a settlement against the will of the South Eastern, the Midland, the County Down, and the Northern Counties would be putting before yourself a task of immense difficulty?—No matter how you take it, it is a task of very great difficulty.

33417. Supposing there was an Irish authority, created, of course, by statute, to purchase the lines and unite them in one system by the use of public credit, looking at the rates at which Preference Stocks now stand, and the dividends paid on Ordinary Shares, have you any doubt that by the use of public credit, either by a Treasury loan, or a loan raised on Irish security, the annual charges for the loan required to finance the purchase would be so much less than the present net profits that there would be a large surplus left at the outset?—I should think there would be a surplus.

33418. Is there anything in the general record of State-owned railways in other countries to lead you to think that if there was a public authority in charge of the Irish railways, public opinion would not constrain that authority to pursue a policy of economy as much as possible?—Public opinion would do a great deal.

33419. And if the public authority were an elected one, and did not respond to the public needs, they could be sent about their business?—They might, or they might not.

33420. Now we have come to this—that the public authority would have two surpluses to start with. First, the surplus due to the application of public credit, and then the surplus due to economy; in that way, and in no other, can you secure a surplus for the construction of branches and the reduction of rates. Do you not think it would be a very rash man who would cast away the advantage of a reduction in rates and fares obtainable in that way because of any preference he might have for private management or divided management of railways?—If there was a reduction of rates and fares of course it would be a great advantage.

33421. Would not it more than compensate, in your mind, for any preference you might have for another system of management, to put Ireland on an equal

working with progressive countries?—If you put it to me whether I would rather have them all under Government control, with a certainty of reduction of rates, as against private management and higher rates, naturally I would say at once the Government and reduced rates; but I am very doubtful if the Government would be able to do it.

33422. There would be a surplus from the purchase?—Yes, but I don't think there would be a surplus from the working afterwards.

33423. Though the public felt that the only means for a reduction of rates was economical working?—I don't think so. If you take the roads in the Northern counties you cannot ride with any speed over them.

33424. Are you aware that the working expenses of Irish railways are only 1 per cent. of the receipts less than they are in England, where such extraordinary cost attends the working of railways. Does not that indicate that the cost of Irish railways at present must be such as could hardly be approached under a united system of working?—It does not convey itself to me that way.

33425. You do not think that if the twenty-seven or thirty Irish railways were worked together they could not be worked for something more like 84 per cent., as in Scotland, than 62 per cent., as in Ireland at present?—No; I don't think they could be. I would rather think the rates would be increased if they were under Government control.

33426. I am not speaking of Government control; I am speaking of an Irish elective authority, responsible to the Irish people and bound to make economies? Looking to the condition in which the roads are kept by an elected Council, where you have everybody trying to pound them for it, and they do not improve them, I think the same thing would happen to the railways. You would have them in a worse condition and possibly higher rates.

33427. There is ample proof that the Irish roads are better than they were in the days of the Grand Junction?—Not in the County of Cork. In other counties the roads are splendid.

33428. How many branch railways could be usefully made in Ireland, apart from the prospect of immediate profit?—I suggest three, at all events.

33429. About a hundred branches have been urged in evidence. Five hundred miles of mileage would supply the greater part of the profit?—I think so.

33430. And at £5,000 a mile that would be two and a half millions. The annual charge on that, at 3½ per cent., would be £80,000 or £90,000?—Yes.

33431. And if you had a public authority, and they could secure a surplus of half a million a year by purchase and united working, £80,000 or £90,000 of that would supply a fund out of which the interest on two and a half millions would be paid, and enable the construction of these branches to be taken up?—I would not that be an immense boon?—It would.

33432. How are you going to get it done otherwise?—Simply by guarantee from the counties and assistance from the Treasury.

33433. Are you familiar with the financial results of the operation of the Light Railway Acts of 1833 and succeeding Acts?—I am afraid I am not. I live in the South.

33434. With regard to twenty-two baronial lines, which have been guaranteed, do you know that nine or ten of them have a deficit in working expenses; and that out of the twenty-two all but one (which is an exception only because the Great Southern and Western Railway Company have, by Parliamentary bargain, cancelled the liability), entail a levy on the locality for the dividends and most of them for working expenses?—Not all of them. I think on the Comstock line for three years only the baronies paid portion of the guarantee, and the Glen Valley line has been paying back to the county all that the county paid for some years. Most of those in which there is a deficiency in working expenses are managed by representatives of the County Council, not shareholders.

33435. Every one of the twenty-two guaranteed lines under the Act of 1833 have passed a levy for dividends, and nine of them an additional levy for deficit of working expenses. You are aware that the Treasury does not guarantee working expenses?—Yes.

33436. And that that liability, and also liability for any loss through accident on the line, falls on the shareholders?—Yes, and these lines where there is a deficit in working expenses are managed by elected members, not shareholders.

33437. The ratepayers, being fearful of these unlimited liabilities, the Treasury not being willing to guarantee for accidents or working expenses, and the railway companies being unwilling to take over the lines unless they are guaranteed against loss, do you think that the present system of guarantee can be carried on. Is it not worked out?—I don't think it is. It is a very odd year that you don't find some extension proposed. I will go as far as to say that the lines would not be made as quickly.

33438. The Government, after having tried, under the Act of 1833 to secure local guarantees, found themselves obliged under subsequent Acts in contract by grants from the Treasury along with guarantees, and finally, since 1856, they found it necessary to make Treasury grants for practically the whole cost of construction; so you see that as time goes on the possibility of a guarantee becomes more slender?—I quite agree with you there.

33439. That being so, what I suggest to you is this: that you will not get the necessary branches made unless the transit question is taken up as one question, and unless there is some general authority to make these branches and make that the public interest, without laying it down that there should be an immediate profit, and without laying the burden on the district—in that the best system to secure the development of the transit system in Ireland?—I don't know. I didn't go into that question.

33440. Would you prefer that each district should push its own project, that each district should be left to press its particular claims upon officials; and that the system of scraps and doles should be pursued, instead of taking up the question of transit in a wholly methodical and public-spirited way?—If it is taken up in a wholly methodical and public-spirited way I agree with you; but look at the way in which the roads in the County of Cork are managed by the County Council, and the disgraceful condition they are in. If they had to manage the railways for the County of Cork, and kept them in the same condition, we would be in a worse plight than ever we were before in our lives.

33441. I imagine that if Parliament came to act due care would be taken that the authority to be created should be efficient for its work, and properly responsible to the people?—In that case I would agree to it.

Examined by Mr. ACORNTH.

33442. Can you conceive anything of more vital importance to the farmers of Cork than that the roads passing their own doors should be good?—I should struggle so.

33443. And yet you say they fail to maintain satisfactorily?—Yes.

33444. I gather from the general effect of your replies to the persuasive questions of my friend Mr. Sexton that you say that in theory there might be great advantage in a State system?—Yes.

33445. But in practice you distrust it?—Very much.

33446. One experience of your own you gave us on the Inter-Colonial Railway of Canada—do you know anything about the earnings of that railway?—No I was in the train when the incident which I have mentioned happened.

33447. Do you know that the earnings of the Inter-Colonial of Canada are about 200 dollars a week?—I don't know that.

33448. Do you know anything about the railways of Brazil?—I don't.

33449. Do you know that Brazil is getting rid of its State management of railways?—No.

33450. Mr. Sexton—There are four classes of railways in that country, and it cannot be said that State railways are discouraged in Brazil.

33451. Mr. Acornth—The State has got rid of a great many railways which were worked at a loss, and which are now worked at a profit by companies.

33452. Mr. Sexton—I demand to that.

33453. Mr. Acornth—I won't carry it any further.

33454. Taking it that you are not in favour of State ownership, you are of opinion that power should be given to the Board of Trade to say what line should be built?—Yes.

33455. And what particular route it should take?—Yes.

On, 22, 1907.

Mr. J. W. Deane,
1100, C.T.,
Kew, S.W.

The probability of further extensions in Ireland being promoted from private resources.

Approval of a public authority for railway administration if efficient and properly responsible to the people.

Canadian and Brazilian railways.

Suggestion that the Board of Trade should decide as to what new lines should be made.

Oct. 18, 1867.

Mr J. W.
Dermott,
at 1867, C.E.,
Kilgobbin.

33452a. Now, first of all, in reference to the Board of Trade officer, you are aware that in the case of any light railway in England there is a tribunal that come to the spot—at may be in the village school-house—and hear the arguments for and against, is that what you desire?—I was not aware of that, for I have been in Denmark for ten or twelve years; but that is what I desire. It would reduce the preliminary expenses, this does not apply to Ireland.

33453. And the Board of Trade is then to say which line should go on?—Yes.

33454. You mentioned a line in the South which you say cost more than it should have cost?—Yes, the Clonakilly line, because of the opposition of one of the landowners.

The branch
lines in South
West Cork
to be con-
sidered
taken over
by the Cork
and Brandon
Company.

33455. You would compel the Cork and Brandon Company to take over the branch lines and work them?—I would, and I would leave it to the Board of Trade to say what the terms should be.

33456. Was it an objection to the cost or the opposition of the landed proprietors that caused the worst route to be selected?—I would not be afraid of his not giving the land. He would have to do it in any case.

Terms to be
left to Board
of Trade.

33457. To come to another point—you want to compel the Cork and Brandon to work the Tinsclague and Courtmacsherry lines?—Yes.

The same
procedure to
be adopted in
other cases.

33458. What does that mean—how are you going to do it; would you allow the Government to say what it ought to work it at?—Yes, I should like the Board of Trade Inspector to say what it ought to be done for; and though I am a shareholder in the Cork and Brandon myself I would say that the Cork and Brandon should do it for that.

33459. Take as a comparison the ordinary case of the compulsory purchase of land?—You pay about 150 per cent. extra for it.

33460. When a man is compelled to sell his land he is given a very full price for it?—A very full price.

33461. But when you are compelling a railway company to buy something against their will, and to take over the working and responsibility of a line, would you give them any more for being compelled to purchase?—No; I would only give them the actual and fair cost of doing it.

33462. Do you know of any precedent for it?—I would be more inclined to give them a percentage to pay themselves.

33463. Of course once they get it they would have no interest in starting the line?—I would give them £4 per mile a week as a minimum, and if the traffic increased beyond a certain point I would give them so much.

33464. Four pounds a mile a week?—That is the minimum of expenses; and if the traffic increased beyond that I would give a certain percentage, so as to make it worth their while to do everything they could to develop and increase the traffic.

33465. But if you had forced them to buy the line they would not be in the best of tempers?—No.

The interest
of the working
company
would induce
proper work-
ing of the
acquired
systems.

33466. Would they not keep the working expenses down and take the £4 a mile a week and starve the traffic?—I don't think it would pay them to do that. The line would get into bad order, and they would make themselves liable for accidents. It would not be their interest to do otherwise than develop the traffic.

33467. Now, just as to one other point that you raised. You spoke of compulsory amalgamation and of two systems; practically that would mean no competition in Ireland?—It doesn't mean any competition.

33468. Do you value the existing competition much?—I don't think there is much competition really.

33469. In other words, you don't think you are giving up anything that is very much?—Not in the South of Ireland.

The loss of
competition
through an
amalgamation
of all the
lines with
two systems
was important.

33470. Is there for amalgamation you would be getting the advantage of a larger system and more efficient management?—If you amalgamate all the small lines together.

33471. Would you propose that any more control should be exercised by the Government over the railways than it exercises at present?—I don't quite understand your question.

33472. At present there is a certain amount of competition?—Not in the South; I don't think there is any.

33473. But in many parts of Ireland, or in some part of Ireland, there is still competition—so Waterford for example?—Yes—to Waterford there is.

33474. You are proposing to get rid of it?—Yes, I would get rid of it, and the result would be that the railway companies would work in the most economical manner, and the rates would be low in proportion.

33475. You would be depriving Waterford, for example, of whatever protection competition gave it in the past—whatever it was, big or little?—I don't much believe in that protection. If you have your harbour and its conveniences what they ought to be, you will get your share of traffic independent of anything else.

33476. Then your answer is that you are not degrading anybody of anything if you get rid of competition?—Not anything that we ought to have.

33477. You don't think any more Government control is necessary?—Except as a means of getting at the Government. It ought to be made as cheap as possible. In any tribunal in which you have to employ counsel and solicitors nothing but a big corporation can stand the ordeal.

33478. You are speaking rather of the means of redress?—Yes; but I don't think the Government ought to have too big a finger in the pie. The Board of Trade have put railway companies to unnecessary expense. Where you have a road over which two carts might be crossing in the day their requirements are just the same as in England, where there might be two thousand carts, and you are compelled to put a bridge.

33479. I gather that you don't want to give the Government more hand in the concern than it has at present?—Not in that way.

Examined by Colonel HURSTON, P.M.

33480. I gather from what you say that you consider the procedure under the Act of 1854, which practically left the consideration of the direction that lines should take in the hands of the Board of Works, is not satisfactory, and that you would be glad to see some other tribunal, who would, in the case of future extensions, have the direction of them?—I would like to see it done cheaper.

33481. You don't think that the system which makes such a body as that responsible for the direction of a line is to take and for the supervision of it satisfactory?—I do not.

33482. You spoke of three extensions—the Clonakilly and two others. I think that these three were made prior to any of those Light Railway Acts?—The Clonakilly and the Bantley were.

33483. And the Den Valley?—Yes.

33484. And though the Treasury don't give any recognition, there was a very heavy guarantee incurred by the district in respect of each of these extensions. From the Board of Trade returns, it appears that there is £200,000 of guaranteed and debenture stock on which the county pays?—In the Clonakilly case the railway company ceased to require the guarantee in 1854, and after then it has paid its way. In the case of the Den Valley a large sum was paid for interest, but most of it has been paid back to the county; and in three years more every penny that was advanced by the county, in the shape of interest on the capital of the Den Valley, will have been refunded to it.

33485. Are you correct in your statement with respect to the £200,000 guaranteed debenture stock in these three extensions?—The county never had to pay a penny of interest on the debenture stock.

33486. Who paid it?—The companies did.

33487. Then all that the county paid on was the guaranteed stock?—Yes; and in the case of the Clonakilly line it was only paid for fourteen years. The Den Valley Company have been paying it, and they will have repaid it in three years more. The Bantley Company have been paying the interest on the debenture stock. The Clonakilly paid 1 per cent., and it will probably be able to pay three per cent. next meeting on the ordinary stock.

33488. The Den Valley Extension does not pay?—Not on the ordinary stock.

33489. You consider that the results of these three lines more than justify their construction?—I think they fully justify it.

33400 I gather from your evidence that whether the railways of Ireland should be amalgamated into one or two systems or not, you would be strongly in favour of those ten or eleven little systems that you have referred to in the South of Cork County being brought together and put under the Cork and Brandon Company?—Yes. From your question, I think that possibly you don't understand how those lines were made.

33401 You mean those three particular lines?—Yes.

33402 I suppose the ordinary capital was supplied by the people?—Take the case of the Clonachilly extension. £40,000 was required to make the line. The capital was fixed at £40,000. £20,000 was borrowed on debentures, and a guarantee was obtained for £20,000, half of the ordinary capital. The balance was looked on as waste paper, and the capital was fixed at £40,000, to enable the £20,000 to be borrowed.

33403 The other £20,000 was on paper?—On paper.

33404 That was not economical?—It was looked on as waste paper. Nobody valued it or cared about it.

33405 They never expected that it would pay anything?—No. It was expected that the line would be made with £20,000 and the £20,000 that was borrowed on the debenture stock.

33406 You refer to the disinclination of the county to pay anything more for the Roscarberry extension?—Yes.

33407 That proposal was made in 1886?—In 1886.

33408 Before that was it the desire of the Cork and Brandon Company to divert the traffic to Skibbereen in order that they might get a larger haul?—Yes.

33409 Was there any proposal made to make the extension to Roscarberry?—We did not see our way to getting a guarantee since.

33410 Then, with the exception of the Timoleague extension and Schull and Skibbereen, the rest of the lines have done very well?—Yes. I think these lines would be very much improved if they were under the management of the Cork and Brandon Company.

33411 Don't you think that the railway company might be prepared, from the light of experience, to meet you more reasonably as to the extension to Roscarberry?—The railway company would, but I doubt if we could get a guarantee from the county.

33500 Has there been any suggestion to the Cork and Brandon Company to make any of those small lines that you describe?—I think they have a certain amount of control over the Timoleague and Court-masherry.

33501 Do you think there would be any great difficulty in getting those different little independent companies in that system to come together and join on, and throw their lot in with the Cork and Brandon Company?—I am afraid there would.

33502 Short of being compelled to do so, they would not be willing to fall in?—Yes.

33503 You refer to Kinsale—there are railway accommodations there?—No, we are half a mile from the harbour. We made representations twelve years ago, but nothing has been done.

33504 Have you made any representations to the railway company?—Yes, over and over again.

33505 There is a considerable amount of fishing there?—Yes, but it has fallen off. The steam trawlers fishing off the coast have damaged the fishing.

33506 Then there is not the same necessity for extending the railway to the harbour that there was twelve years ago?—I would not say that. If the extension were made now we would get all the fish.

33507 It is directed to Skibbereen because the fishermen have not the extension, but they would take advantage of a Kinsale extension if they had it?—If they had it.

33510 You speak of a development in the Glen-gariff direction; are you aware that the County Councils have power under the Act of 1886 to make a presentation in favour of this harbour extension if they think it desirable?—Yes.

33511 You don't think that that power has been exercised?—Not to my knowledge.

33512 Has it ever occurred to you to make any suggestion in that direction?—I think the railway would be practically a guarantee on a certain amount of capital.

33513 They have power to bring before the Treasury anything in the nature of pier or harbour works, and to make a presentation if necessary. I don't think that is generally known? No, I did not know it; but I think if they could get aid from the Treasury there would be no difficulty in getting it done.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. J. W. Dorman,
M.P. for C.R.,
Kinsale.

Anticipated opposition to amalgamation on the part of the small Cork lines.

A railway extension to Kinsale Harbour to meet the fishing industry suggested.

The power of the County Councils to make presentations in favour of pier or harbour works.

Mr. Jeremiah Murphy, Farmer, Clonachilly, Co. Kerry.

The manufacture of butter by farmers has practically ceased.

Complaint as to excessive rates for fresh butter.

Mr. JEREMIAH MURPHY examined by Lord PEARCE (in the Chair).

33604 You are a trader from Kerry?—Yes.

33605 Do you represent any public body?—No, I do not.

33606 You are only here to give evidence as a trader?—As a farmer.

33607 You are not in any business?—No, I am not in any business there at all.

33608 The points you wish to give evidence about are farming and, I suppose, the butter traffic especially?—Yes, butter is the principal industry of the district.

33609 What about cattle?—We have cattle and dairying, to some extent.

33610 Where you have butter do you have cattle raising?—Yes.

33611 Even where you have creameries?—Yes; that is so.

33612 You have no creameries?—There is not a creamery at all.

33613 Are the cattle a good class?—As a rule they are not. The land is not so good as it is in some parts of the country where the creameries are. The land is inferior, and there is an inferior breed of cattle on them.

33614 An inferior breed?—You cannot keep a good breed of cattle on mountain land.

33615 Do you not give milk to the calves?—Yes.

33616 Are they not made better by the milk?—That is certain.

33617 Do you complain about your markets for fresh butter?—Yes.

33618 What is your complaint?—At one time it was the custom of the district that every farmer manufactured his own butter. It was packed in firkins and was heavily salted, and was all sold in the Cork market. But the butter produced in this way was generally inferior in quality. The cream was allowed to go too long without churning and

sufficient care and skill were not bestowed on the manufacture, with the result that after a while prices became so low that butter-making ceased to be remunerative.

33619 Because the butter was not of sufficient quality to compete?—With foreign-made butter.

33620 And, therefore, it got to such a low rate that it did not pay the farmers to send it to the Cork market?—That is so.

33621 What has taken place since?—The farmers and the exporters took the matter in hands, and instead of the farmers selling their own butter the exporters commenced to manufacture the butter. The farmers sold all their butter to them fresh.

33622 That is what they are doing now?—Every farmer sells his butter fresh. He does not manufacture it, except in a few instances.

33623 You are getting better prices for it?—Certainly.

33624 What about the railway rates—are you satisfied with them?—Oh, no. While the butter was packed in firkins and called the rates were considered reasonable. At present it is churned rapidly and sent to market immediately, and instead of very large consignments you have a number of small consignments and the charges run very high.

33625 Give us one instance?—Fresh butter from the district is consigned in boxes—larger ones of 56 lbs. and smaller ones of 28 lbs. On the small box the charge is 6d. for the box going to market; and on the empty box when returned to the consignor there is a charge of 6d.

33626 Mr. Sefton—Sixpence for the box of butter and sixpence for the box without the butter?—Exactly.

33627 Chairman—What station is that from?—From Leebridge to Cork—59 miles.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. Jeremiah Murphy, Farmer, Clonsilla, Co. Kerry.

(See Appendix No. 22.)

Suggested reduction of the load rate for live stock in the Kerry district.

An improved train service between Keshmonee and Killarney requested.

Complaint that the rates for lime and limestone are excessive, and a hindrance to the expansion of the traffic.

The action of the railway company in failing to support local industries.

Mr. Croker Harrington, Solicitor.—There is some mistake about the empty boxes.

33538 Chairman (to Witness).—Have you any delivery notes?—No, I have not, but I could produce them if I thought they were required.

33539 You pay that regularly?—Oh, yes—always.

33540 You can send the note to the Secretary?—

Oh, yes.

33541 That's 11d. for a quarter of a cwt. of butter—that means 2s. 8d. for a cwt. of butter in 28 lb. boxes; you consider that exorbitant?—Yes, certainly.

33542 And you think it should be reduced. As to cattle, are you satisfied with the rates?—There are parts of the district that are very remote from the towns, and it is a great hardship that dairy cows and heavy cattle should be walked 20 or 30 miles to a fair.

33543 You think it would pay the railway company to reduce their rates?—To establish a load rate for live stock.

33544 So that your cattle could go in some other fellow's wagon?—The system obtains on the Cork and Macroom Railway, with great advantage to the railway company and the public.

33545 You would like the same facility on your line?—Certainly.

33546 Are you perfectly satisfied with your train service—is it very suitable?—No, it is not suitable. It is unsuitable under the present arrangements. Under them the morning train from Keshmonee starts at about a quarter to eleven. People from the district largely use Killybegny, as it is the market and fair town, but the train does not reach Killarney until a quarter past noon, and that is too late for you to transact any business.

33547 Can't you go by an earlier train?—No, there is no earlier train. The return train to Keshmonee does not reach it until a quarter past one.

33548 In the afternoon?—Yes.

33549 That is the first train to Keshmonee in the day?—Yes, exactly.

33550 I take it from what you say that the management is not satisfactory?—They don't seem to take a keen interest in the wants of the district.

33551 I may put it down as your evidence that you consider that it would be for the interest of the railway company to make considerable reductions in the passenger and goods rates?—Certainly.

33552 And that by their doing it they would increase industries in the district?—They would.

33553 Have you any industries?—There is an abundant supply of limestone from Killybegny to Keshmonee, and three public limekilns producing lime of the very best quality. There are also a large number of private limekilns in the district, but the railway rates for lime and limestone are so high that the people make no use of the railway.

33554 What do they do—do they take it by carts?—They take it by carts. Of course only local people can be supplied in that way.

33555 Would you consider that the amalgamation of all the lines into one would help you?—On the Great Southern and Western there is only the one line, and we are as disadvantaged there as if there were twenty distinct lines.

33556 You don't think amalgamation would help you?—I am afraid not.

33557 Mr. Serles.—That line is worked for private profit, but if it was worked by a public authority for the public advantage it would be a very different thing?—It would be.

33558 Mr. Ansell.—You never personally brought any complaints before the Agricultural Board or the Board of Trade?—No.

33559 You have not complained to anybody?—No. 33560 This complaint to the present Commission is the first that you have made?—Yes, the first, because as a rule we are not well acquainted with the powers of the Board of Trade in reference to railway transportation.

33561 Then the action of the railway company in failing to support the local industries is, in your opinion, greatly opposed to the expansion of the traffic?—That is my opinion, certainly.

Examined by Mr. Serles.

33562 I want you to enable the Commission clearly to realise the effect of this system of railway rates on your butter traffic. I understand from

you that about twelve years ago the Cork butter market trustees instituted a system that had an excellent effect?—That is so.

33563 They graded the butter, and you were able to get the best price for butter of the best quality?—Yes.

33564 It is of great importance that the butter should be up to this quality?—Certainly.

33565 Now, I believe the farmers find it most convenient to pack in small boxes of 28 lbs. and 55 lbs. f—Yes, because if it were packed in larger boxes it would go too long without churning, and that would cause deterioration.

33566 And owing to the system of the railway rates—11d. for the carriage of a quarter cwt. box and 1s. 8d. for the carriage of a half cwt. box—it works out to this, that the farmer who sends 28-lb. boxes has to pay at the rate of 23 16s. 3d. a ton, and that the farmer who sends half cwt. boxes has to pay at the rate of 23 3s. 4d. a ton?—23 15s. 4d. and 23 4s. 8d. respectively.

33567 So that you are forced into the hands of the local dealers who get a ton carried for 21?—Yes.

33568 They send by the ton?—Yes.

33569 They do not distinguish between the qualities of the butter, but give the same price for all?—An average price—no grading.

33570 This takes away from the farmer all inducement to produce the best butter?—That is so.

33571 No matter what the quality of the butter he gets the same price?—About the same price.

33572 Therefore, seeing that because of the high railway rates on these small consignments the trade is thrown into the hands of those dealers, the effect is to lower the quality of the butter exported from your part of the country?—Exactly, and besides in the local market there is no competition, and the price is much lower than in the Cork market.

33573 The railway rate system has nullified the efforts of the Cork Butter Trust?—Yes.

33574 And injured your trade in butter of the first quality?—Yes.

33575 You know that the annual value of the import of butter into Great Britain is £21,000,000, and that Ireland only sends out £1,000,000 worth?—That is so.

33576 There is then a great field for the expansion of the Irish trade?—Certainly.

33577 Denmark, which was formerly far behind Ireland, now supplies three times as much butter to Great Britain as Ireland does?—Yes.

33578 And what prospect is there of Ireland recovering her former position in the trade, unless the railways, instead of causing a deterioration in the quality of the butter, help you to improve its quality?—That is what is required.

33579 If they gave moderate rates for small quantities the quality of the butter sent from Lookridge to Cork would be improved?—Certainly.

33580 And the output of it would be much increased?—Yes.

33581 Are you of opinion that the railways should be organised into one system and governed by a public authority responsible to the people of the country?—Yes, certainly—that is my view.

Examined by Mr. Ansell.

33582 You have been telling me, Mr. Murphy, of the old times when you all made bad butter?—Yes.

33583 I remember that an Irish member told the House of Commons that the inferior quality of Cork butter were only fit to dilute margarine?—Yes. The comment to some extent was justified.

33584 Then you put your shoulders to the wheel, and did better?—Certainly.

33585 Isn't this a time to put your own shoulder to the wheel again and get decent quantities sent into Cork, how much do you send at a time?—28 lb. and 56-lb. boxes are the average consignment to the Cork market.

33586 How many boxes do you send at a time?—When the butter is churned it is sent off immediately.

33587 And do you only churn enough to send one 28 lb. and 56 lb. box?—Yes; especially in the winter time.

33588 How many people send from Lookridge?—Thirty or sixty or eighty people.

33589 Supposing that each of them sent 20 lbs., that would be a ton of butter going every day?—Yes.

33590 If you put your heads together, and made up one consignment, and sent it to one man in Cork, you would get the tonnage rate without any trouble at all?—That would be impossible.

33591 Tell me why?—The farmers are situated too far apart, in the first place.

33592 They can all get it to the station, to be sent as one consignment?—It is consigned to separate merchants, and when it is booked separately the company charge separate carriage, which must be paid.

33593 If you sent 4 cwt. you would get the tonnage rate?—But a consignment of 4 cwt. from an individual producer would be impossible.

33594 If you and a dozen of friends agreed to deal with the one merchant in Cork, and make one consignment at Lookridge, you would get the tonnage rate?—Yes; but the butter would not be of equal quality, and how could we distinguish.

33595 Never mind the quality. If you sent ten tons, and agreed to instruct the stationmaster that they were all to be made into one consignment, to be delivered to one dealer in Cork, then you would get tonnage rate?—That could not be carried out at all in practice, in my opinion.

33596 Is it because it would give you trouble, or because the railway rate doesn't hurt you very much?—The merchants are complaining of it exceedingly.

33597 If it pressed you so much you would have worked very hard to avoid paying it?—There is no remedy.

33598 Do you suggest that the usage of the county in which causes the difficulty in adopting it?—I have answered your question.

33599 Or is it because it would give you trouble?—It is impossible. That is my view.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON POE.

33600 To follow up Mr. Asworth's questions—you say that there would be a certain amount of trouble in getting other farmers to combine with you so as to give the railway larger consignments; you will also admit that the fact of the railway company having to carry a large number of boxes consigned to a large number of individuals at the other end of the line gives them a good deal of trouble?—Certainly it gives some trouble, but a considerable reduction might be effected.

33601 Is it not easier for the railway company to deal with one large consignment than with an infinitesimal number of small parcels, each of which has to be handled separately?—When the butter is put into the wagons there is no more trouble. On the other hand, it is more troublesome to handle a parcel of 5 or 6 cwt. of butter than a smaller one.

33602 Mr. Asworth.—I did not suggest that you should make up a big package of 5 or 6 cwt., but that you should send all your boxes in one lot?—Every consignor, as a rule, has a merchant of his own, and how could you consign twelve boxes intended for twelve different persons to one?

33603 How many merchants are there in Cork?—

Practically I don't know the number, but there is a very large number.

33604 Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—There must be some who get large quantities?—Some getting large consignments and some smaller.

33605 Is there no possible means by which the farmers themselves could combine and co-operate in the direction which has been suggested to you?—No, there is not. The question has been considered before by the farmers themselves, and by the merchants themselves, and there is no remedy.

33606 It will be very difficult for you to get low rates until you give some help on your part by some combination?—Well, my way of looking at it is that: that when it pays the railway company to despatch a ton of butter for a local dealer at £1 a ton, the charge of over £5 a ton to the producers would bear a considerable reduction. I would not expect to consign at so low a rate, but they could reduce the present rate considerably.

33607 Do you occasionally send 5 or 6 cwt. of boxes?—No; the boxes are sent separately.

33608 One box to-day and another to-morrow?—As soon as it is churned it is sent, because it cannot be kept.

Cross-examined by Mr. CROKER BARRINGTON, Solicitor.

33609 Mr. Murphy, you come from Lookridge?—Yes.

33610 You want an earlier train from Kenmare to Killarney for goods and passengers. Isn't there a train at a quarter to seven from Kenmare to Lookridge?—There is not.

33611 Isn't there a train at 9.5 from Killarney to Kenmare?—There is not. It returns to Kenmare at 9.5.

33612 If you are late for the train at Lookridge isn't there a train at 8.45, which goes into Killarney at 10.25?—Yes; but it is of no advantage—certainly not from Lookridge.

33613 Chairman.—It is not a market train?—It is not, for there is no market at Killarney on that day.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—He forgets the Wednesday train.

Witness.—There is this train on Wednesday, but on no other day; it is of no advantage whatever, as Wednesday is not the market day at Killarney. There is no market day in Kenmare.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—On Wednesday there is an early train.

33614 Mr. Asworth.—His answer is that Wednesday is not the day they want for an early train.

The examination of the witness then concluded, and

The Chairman said.—Gentlemen, the sitting of the Commission is now adjourned, and we shall meet again in the Boardroom of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, in London, at 11 o'clock, on Friday morning, the 28th November; and we are counting on the railway companies being ready to give their evidence about the first or second week of January, at the latest.

Oct. 22, 1907.

Mr. Jeremiah Murphy, Farmer, Lookridge, Co. Kerry.

Commissioner and co-operation of farmers not feasible.

The present high rates for small lots of butter capable of considerable reduction.

The train service.—Kenmare and Killarney disjoined.

FIFTY-FIFTH PUBLIC SITTING.—FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Office, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—SIR CHARLES SCOTTER, BART., Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FISHER, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JEKYLL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON FOR, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; Mr. W. M. ACWORTH, and Mr. JOHN AUDLEY FREDERICK ASPINALL;

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Mr. W. G. S. ADAMS, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Nov. 8, 1907.

Mr. W. G. S. ADAMS, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture.

33614. What are you, Mr. Adams?—The Superintendent of the Statistics and Intelligence Branch of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.

33615. You have been preparing some railway statistics relating to the cost of transit in England, Scotland and Ireland?—I submit here tables which were asked for by the Commission in continuation of certain statistics which were published some years ago by the Department, and I have attached an explanatory note relating to the interpretation of these tables which the Commission asked should be prepared.

Tables of the average receipts per ton on minerals carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in the years 1901 to 1906 submitted.

33616. What is your first table?—The first table is a statement showing the average receipt per ton on minerals carried in England, Scotland and Ireland in the years 1901 to 1906, and showing the excess of the Irish average over the English and Scotch average for the same years.

33617. I do not know myself, unless you give me some explanation, what you intend to prove by this table. "The average receipt per ton on minerals carried in England, Scotland and Ireland" will prove nothing unless you can give me some explanation.—I have stated in paragraph 2 of the note attached to the table the limitations of the statistics.

33618. Just mention the limitations, will you?—The tables do not afford the material for a comparison of rates in the strict sense of the term, for the carriage of goods and minerals in England, Scotland and Ireland respectively. In the strict sense of the word a rate is a charge for the carriage of a known quantity and class of goods for a known distance under conditions agreed upon as to receipt and delivery of goods, expenditure of transit, liability for loss, etc. In order, therefore, to make comparisons between rates strictly understood it is necessary to allow for length of haul, weight of load, class of goods, the inclusion or exclusion of terminal charges, as well as other differentiating conditions in the respective cases. The official railway statistics do not enable such comparisons to be made, and therefore the attached tables do not afford any adequate evidence for making comparisons between the rates in Ireland and the rates in Scotland or England.

33619. I do not suppose that anybody will take any exception to these limitations, but now what about paragraph 3?—Paragraph 3 states that these comparative tables draw attention to the fact that the average receipt per ton of goods and minerals carried in Ireland is considerably higher than in England and Scotland. In other words, transit is a heavier item of cost to producers and consumers.

33620. Of course there may be many circumstances which go to make the rates in Ireland higher than the average rates in Scotland and England?—Yes.

33621. Have you considered those circumstances?—The higher receipt may be due to several causes, such as those already indicated in paragraph 2. But

whatever the explanation, the fact of the higher cost remains, and affects adversely the production and consumption of the country. Taken altogether with the statistics of train mileage and tonnage carried, which show how much smaller is the railway traffic in Ireland as compared with England or Scotland, these figures illustrate, especially from the point of view of production, the character and importance of the transit problem in Ireland.

33622. At this point could you hand in a table showing these differences?—Table 1 shows the average receipt per ton on minerals carried in England, Scotland and Ireland and the excess of the Irish average receipt.

33623. Could you hand in a copy of that to go on the Minutes?—Yes.

33624. We will just put on the Notes, as examples from 1903 to 1906, the average receipt per ton of minerals carried in England, Scotland and Ireland; we will put those figures on for what they are worth.—Do you wish me to read them.

33625. No; if you hand them to the reporter they will be included in your evidence.—Table 2 is the average receipt per ton on merchandise.

33626. Are these taken out for the same periods?—For the same periods.

33627. And the basis of calculation is just the same?—The basis of calculation is just the same; they are based on Tables 13 and 14 in the Board of Trade returns. Perhaps I should state that the tables on which they are based are Tables 13 and 14 in the Board of Trade returns. (The tables were handed in, and are as follows):—

TABLE 1.—Statement showing the Average Receipt Per Ton on Minerals carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in the Years 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906; and showing Excess of Irish Average over English and Scotch for the same years.

Years	Average Receipt, per Ton, on Minerals carried in			Percentage excess of Irish Average above 1901	
	England	Scotland	Ireland	England	Scotland
1901 ..	£ 4 12 8	£ 5 14 4	£ 7 8 1	74.02	109.02
1902 ..	£ 6 0 0	£ 6 0 4	£ 8 3 3	70.23	124.65
1903 ..	£ 6 0 0	£ 6 1 3	£ 8 6 2	71.24	121.65
1904 ..	£ 6 0 5	£ 6 0 6	£ 8 6 7	81.48	128.97
1905 ..	£ 6 0 5	£ 6 0 6	£ 8 6 7	75.48	129.89
1906 ..	£ 6 1 8	£ 6 0 6	£ 7 7 0	79.23	118.37

Average receipts per ton (goods and minerals) higher in Ireland than in Great Britain.

TABLE 2.—Statement showing the Average Receipt per Ton on Merchandise carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in the Years 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906; and showing Excess of Irish Average over English and Scotch for the same years.

YEARS	Average Receipt per Ton on Merchandise carried in			Percentage excess of Irish Average over	
	England	Scotland	Ireland	English	Scotch
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		
1901	4 9-58	5 3-48	6 10-74	40-56	95-68
1902	4 9-54	5 3-58	6 11-26	37-99	95-78
1903	5 3-25	5 9-75	7 0-45	33-68	95-40
1904	5 3-18	5 9-85	7 0-30	33-70	95-95
1905	5 7-85	6 11-90	8 13-45	55-95	99-58
1906	5 7-75	6 11-77	8 16-05	54-14	99-07

NOTE.—A change of the classification of "Merchandise" and "Minerals" was made in 1903. The figures for 1903 and subsequent years are therefore not strictly comparable with the figures for the years prior to 1903. In this connection the following statement supplied by the Board of Trade may be of interest:—

"Prior to 1903 there was a considerable diversity of practice amongst the various railways with regard to the articles included by them under the respective heads of "Minerals" and "General Merchandise." The Board accordingly took steps to secure uniformity in this respect, and general directions were given by them in the year 1903 that from the commencement of that year the heading "Mineral Traffic" should include all the articles enumerated in Classes A and B in the Railway Clearing House Accounts, together with any other traffic involved at or below 3s. per ton. The returns furnished to this Department for 1903 and subsequent years have been compiled on this uniform basis, and the figures for the years compiled on the very divergent bases which were found to have existed prior to 1903 are not available."

33628. As a matter of compilation I have no doubt these figures are all correct. Then there will be on the Notes the average receipt per ton on minerals for those periods that I have named, and the average receipt per ton on merchandise?—Yes. Then there is in Tables 3, 4, and 5 the average receipt per first-class passenger, per second-class passenger, and per third-class passenger for the same years, 1901 to 1906, in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively.

33629. Very well; all these figures will go on the Notes just as you have given them. You have taken the passengers separately, I see—the first, second, and third classes separately?—Yes. That is how they were requested to be handed in to the Commissioners.

33630. Mr. Asquith.—I take it that excludes the seamen altogether in each case?—Yes.

33631. Sir Herbert Jekyll.—Does that include all goods and passenger traffic on the railways?—I believe that it does.

33632. In both cases?—Yes.

33633. In England as well as in Ireland?—Yes; it includes all the passenger traffic.

33634. Lord Pirrie.—It includes excursion traffic, of course?—Yes.

33635. Mr. Asquith.—It relates to the total receipts, and, therefore, it would include all light railways?—It would include all light railways, it was based on the Board of Trade returns.

33636. Chairman.—Then the tables, which will be handed in, will show the average fare for first, second, and third class passengers carried in the three countries—is that so?—Yes. The last table, number 6, is simply an extract from the Board of Trade Returns of the mileage run by the goods and mineral trains; (2) the tonnage of goods and minerals car-

ried, and (3) the length of line in miles open in Ireland, England, and Scotland respectively for the years 1905, 1906, and 1906.

The Tables were handed in, and are as follows:—

TABLE 3.—Statement showing the Average Receipt per First Class Passenger carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in the years 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, respectively; and showing Excess of Irish Average over English and Scotch for the same years.

YEARS	Average Fare per First Class Passenger carried in			Percentage excess of Irish Average over	
	England	Scotland	Ireland	English	Scotch
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		
1901	5 1-74	1 0-64	1 3-36	3-30	56-80
1902	5 1-32	1 0-54	1 3-76	0-83	60-73
1903	5 2-10	1 9-85	1 6-85	11-74	55-74
1904	5 0-75	1 9-35	1 3-21	7-35	59-55
1905	1 11-01	1 6-88	2 2-24	11-50	67-38
1906	1 11-64	1 6-11	2 5-18	14-02	55-54

NOTE.—All railways in each of the three countries are included.

TABLE 4.—Statement showing the Average Receipt per Second Class Passenger carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in the years 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, respectively; and showing Excess of Irish Average over English and Scotch for the same years.

YEARS	Average Fare per Second Class Passenger carried in			Percentage excess of Irish Average over	
	England	Scotland	Ireland	English	Scotch
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		
1901	0 10-25	—	1 3-75	48-80	—
1902	0 10-68	—	1 2-69	49-02	—
1903	0 10-75	—	1 3-58	49-49	—
1904	0 10-75	—	1 3-77	48-64	—
1905*	1 1-68	—	1 5-65	14-80	—
1906	1 1-20	—	1 4-04	3-56	—

* Second Class abolished on the Metropolitan and District Railway.

NOTE.—All railways in each of the three countries are included.

TABLE 5.—Statement showing the Average Receipt per Third Class Passenger carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in the years 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, respectively; and showing Excess of Irish Average over English and Scotch for the same years.

YEARS	Average Fare per Third Class Passenger carried in			Percentage excess of Irish Average over	
	England	Scotland	Ireland	English	Scotch
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		
1901	0 8-34	0 6-47	0 11-65	83-42	75-18
1902	0 8-28	0 8-83	0 13-30	82-32	83-02
1903	0 8-38	0 8-75	0 11-80	93-42	77-63
1904	0 8-27	0 8-28	0 11-94	80-43	76-00
1905	0 8-81	0 9-36	0 11-76	56-82	95-67
1906	0 8-21	0 8-34	0 11-92	59-09	73-38

NOTE.—All railways in each of the three countries are included.

Nov. 4, 1907.

Mr. W. G. B. Adams, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture.

Tables of the average receipt per passenger carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland in years 1901 to 1906.

Nov. 4, 1907.
Mr. W. G. S.
Adams,
Superintendent of
Statistics,
Department of
Agriculture.

TABLE 5.—Statement showing, according to the Railway Returns published by the Board of Trade, (1.) the Mileage Run by Goods and Mineral Trains, (2.) the Tonnage of Goods and Minerals Carried, and (3.) the Length of Line in Miles open in Ireland, England, and Scotland, respectively, for the years 1895, 1900, and 1905.

1895.			
	Ireland.	England.	Scotland.
Mileage of Goods and Mineral Trains,	Miles, 4,757,187	Miles, 127,169,640	Miles, 18,557,568
Tonnage of Goods and Minerals (Total),	Tons, 4,758,687	Tons, 220,184,848	Tons, 68,247,481
Length of Line (Single),	Miles, 2,581	Miles, 5,479	Miles, 2,087
" " (Double or more),	Miles, 412	Miles, 9,481	Miles, 1,501
1900.			
	Ireland.	England.	Scotland.
Mileage of Goods and Mineral Trains,	Miles, 5,494,780	Miles, 154,555,538	Miles, 22,865,323
Tonnage of Goods and Minerals (Total),	Tons, 5,151,510	Tons, 218,534,742	Tons, 68,255,481
Length of Line (Single),	Miles, 2,587	Miles, 5,894	Miles, 2,086
" " (Double),	Miles, 542	Miles, 7,255	Miles, 1,417
" " (Three),	Miles, 1	Miles, 168	Miles, 2
" " (Four or more),	Miles, —	Miles, 719	Miles, 15
1905.			
	Ireland.	England.	Scotland.
Mileage of Goods and Mineral Trains,	Miles, 5,328,864	Miles, 153,167,897	Miles, 20,642,568
Tonnage of Goods and Minerals (Total),	Tons, 5,045,758	Tons, 215,239,349	Tons, 65,659,104
Length of Line (Single),	Miles, 2,578	Miles, 5,218	Miles, 2,075
" " (Double),	Miles, 640	Miles, 8,535	Miles, 1,212
" " (Three),	Miles, 1	Miles, 218	Miles, 27
" " (Four or more),	Miles, —	Miles, 1,025	Miles, 21

NOTE.—The mileage of Goods and Mineral Trains does not include the mileage of mixed trains—nor the tonnage of Goods and Minerals which is carried by mixed trains. The total tonnage carried by "Mixed Trains" is small—the figures for 1905 are—England, 171,560 tons, and Ireland, 348,864 tons. No "Mixed Trains" are returned for Scotland.

The statistics of train mileage of Goods and Mineral Trains, and of the total tonnage of Merchandise and Minerals carried in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively show that the quantity of Goods and Minerals carried per train mile in England and Scotland is much higher than in Ireland. The fact may be due to the prevalence of average shorter haulage or to heavier train loads, or to both of these conditions, in England and Scotland as compared with Ireland. It will be observed, however, that while the statistics published by the Board of Trade include the mileage of Live Stock trains in the number of miles travelled by Goods and Mineral trains, there is no allowance for these Live Stock freights in the corresponding tables of total tonnage of Goods traffic, and as the transit of Live Stock is, proportionately to the total Goods traffic, much larger in Ireland than in England or Scotland, the contrast as regards the tonnage of Goods and Minerals carried per train mile is not as great as it appears.

33637. Have you any information with reference to the imports and exports of Ireland with you—any statistics?—I have the first and second reports dealing with the statistics for the years 1904 and 1905.

33638. With regard to the year 1905, what figures have you got there before you?—I have got a detailed report with the full figures.

33639. That is the report which we have all got?—Yes.

33640. I do not think we need examine the Notes with that?—There is no further information yet published. The third report will be issued in the course of a few months.

33641. Are those all the statistics you have prepared in reference to the Irish railway traffic generally?—Yes. I should like to point out that this is the statement asked for by the Commission, and I was requested to attend simply to explain those particular figures and tables which the Commission desired to have; therefore, I have not prepared any general evidence.

33642. No; I think the tables explain themselves?—I think they do, but there may be questions asked about them.

33643. Of course, as you have very fairly said, there are different conditions relating to these figures; you

named them in the first part of your evidence. You can give reasons, I daresay, why the average rate per ton, on minerals for instance, in Ireland is larger than in England?—Yes. I can see many probable reasons.

33644. At any rate, there are the figures for what they are worth?—These are the figures for what they are worth, and they draw attention to a very important fact; that is our contention about them.

33645. The important fact being that wherever the cause, per ton, they cost more in Ireland than in the other countries?—Yes, the cost of transit, looking at the production and consumption of the country, is a heavier stem here, and the cost of transit falls of course on the producers and consumers of the country.

Examined by Mr. SEYMOUR.

33646. I observe from your last report that the imports and the exports in 1905 increased from the preceding year by about the same amount?—Yes; that is in the general summary.

33647. It remains true, according to your estimate—your figures may be taken, I believe, as a reasonable estimate—that the imports into Ireland in 1905, as

Particulars
included in
the tables
submitted,
asked for by
Commission

in 1904, exceed the exports from it by about 24,000,000 a year?—That is what our present evidence shows.

33642. You say there is a good deal of difficulty in making a complete account of Irish imports and exports?—Yes.

33643. Can you briefly state the nature of that difficulty?—The root of the difficulty is the absence of a document which clearly states the description of the goods, the weight of the particular consignments, and the value of those consignments.

33644. The difficulty applies to every element of the computation?—Yes.

33645. The class of the goods, the quantity of the goods, and the value, I suppose, of the unit of weight or measure?—Yes.

33646. The difficulty extends over the whole field of inquiry?—It does, but it is more acute in certain classes of goods than in others.

33647. Can you give an instance?—For example, it is easier to get the import of wheat and the value of the import of wheat than it is to get the real nature and the value of cotton and other goods which come in under the general head of drapery, in other words, drapery will include the most various terms.

33648. Goods that are visible to the eye are more easily valued than goods that are wrapped up in cases?—Yes.

33649. The exports from Ireland are, I think, to the extent of three-fourths of the whole value compared under about a dozen heads?—Yes; the number of big items in our exports is small.

33650. Animals, bacon, hams, butter, eggs, poultry, linen, ships?—Yes.

33651. Those are easily valued?—Yes.

33652. They are much more easily valued than the imports?—They are much more easily valued than the imports.

33653. Does the difficulty then of forming a complete account apply much more to the imports than to the exports?—It does.

33654. May it then be said with confidence that if there were a complete account the effect would be to increase the quantity and value of the imports more than of the exports?—I doubt that. I think we have evidence to show whether it would be one way or the other, because so far as the gross quantities coming in are concerned, we may be assumed to have as complete a return of the one as the other; but whether our estimate of value err on the side of excess or defect—we cannot tell.

33655. But at the time of making the accounts, when the harbour body or the shipping company make the account upon which you proceed, they have a more visible and easily measured basis on which to proceed in the case of exports?—The goods exported are to a large extent visible.

33656. They are easily numbered, easily weighed, and the prices of them, per unit of value, are well known?—Yes. All the same I do not wish to minimise the difficulty of getting the value of exports, which is very considerable.

33657. I am not so much upon the absolute difficulty in either case as upon the relative difficulty between exports and imports?—The relative difficulty is more in the case of the imports.

33658. That may be stated in another way, that you are likely to arrive at a more complete account of the exports in your present inquiry than of the imports?—It is more complete in the sense that the items are fewer and more simple, but it is not more complete, in the sense that we may have omitted to allow for quantities in the imports which we have allowed for in the corresponding exports.

33659. You can never exactly arrive at the goods actually exported than you can at those imported?—We can.

33660. Of course errors in value may occur on either side of the account?—Yes.

33661. Now, did the harbour authorities give you all the information in their possession?—I believe so, especially now that we have been able to explain fully, and give them proof of the nature of the work that is being done. I may say that every harbour authority which has the information available gives it.

33662. Some of them have all you want?—No.

33663. None of them?—None of them.

33670. In what respect are the most fully informed of them deficient?—In this respect, that even the best of them have only the ship's manifest to go on, and the ship's manifests themselves are defective.

33671a. *Chairman*.—Certainly.

33671. Mr. Sturges.—Then other harbour authorities in Ireland, I suppose, especially those that collect no dues on goods, have no material whatever?—No.

33672. They keep no account?—They keep no account.

33673. Those who had accounts gave you all the information they had?—They gave us all the information they had.

33674. Then as to the shipping companies, in the case of either deficient information or no information whatever in the hands of the harbour authority, do the shipping companies respond readily?—Some do; others do not.

33675. May I ask what companies gave you the information?—I might say that such companies as the Newry and Dundalk Steamship Company gave us information; I have not a list of them; I think it would be better to make no distinction between the companies that did and those that did not.

33676. Can you give some idea of their relative importance?—I think I can say that with the exception of some two companies at the present time all the large companies in Ireland have given the information, and one of these two companies has within the last week agreed to give us the information, so that we are practically narrowing it down.

33677. That is important. Do I understand that all the large companies have given the information except one?—All but two within the last few weeks.

33678. And one of the two has now come forward?—One of the two has now agreed to give us this information, and I have hopes that the remaining one will also come forward.

33679. Is it a shipping company only, or is it also a railway company that is standing out?—I may say that it is both a railway company and a shipping company. I do not think it is of cardinal importance unless you would like to have fuller particulars.

33680. I should like to hear fuller particulars?—I think it would be better if I may be allowed simply to leave the matter as it stands, inasmuch as we have been carrying on the negotiations, and it has been extremely difficult to carry these things through.

33681. As far as your evidence goes that would be so; but when we pass beyond your evidence to the public interest, if we leave the matter as it stands, you will have no legal power to obtain information either from harbour authorities or from shipping companies?—I think the position is materially changed now that we have been able to show what we are doing. For example, this company that we have recently agreed with is satisfied that no disclosure of their private trade will take place. That is really what has been one of the elements holding back companies from giving information.

33682. You give assurance that in no case would you make such disclosure?—We did.

33683. But, still, in some cases the information was not made available?—In some cases.

33684. It is of great importance to Ireland that there should be from year to year an accurate account of imports and exports. I will ask you to tell the Commission whether you have any suggestion to make for the purpose of securing that the account shall be complete?—Yes, I have this suggestion, which was put forward as an earlier date, that the Department should be given power to require adequate returns both as regards imports and exports, which returns should show to their satisfaction the description of goods, the weight of the goods, and their value.

33685. *Lord Foster*.—Is not there an Act of Parliament dealing with that?—No, but if one goes the length of the Census of Production Act, I do not see why one should not go the length of requiring the imports and exports.

33686. Mr. Sturges.—The arguments depending upon these considerations are so weighty, and these considerations have such influence in determining questions that I think we cannot do without an accurate return. Do you agree?—I do.

33687. That there should be legal power to obtain the material for the accurate return?—Yes.

Mon. 8, 1905.

Mr. W. G. B. Adams, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture.

Incomplete nature of the statistics obtainable from the harbour authorities.

Difficulty in obtaining details of imports and exports, traffic from some carrying companies.

Negotiations in progress with several companies.

Suggestion that the Department of Agriculture should be given statutory powers to require adequate returns of imports and exports.

Nov. 8, 1907.

Mr. W. G. R. Adams, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture.

The possibility of great expansion in Ireland's export trade in agricultural produce to English markets.

Transit an important item in the cost of production.

The relative extent of Irish and Continental exports of butter and eggs to Great Britain.

The export of these commodities would be stimulated by improved transit and increased winter production.

33668. You have appended to your Report a return of great importance which shows the total quantities and values of agricultural produce imported into the United Kingdom in each year, and the quantities exported from Ireland.—Yes.

33669. What does that return suggest to you as to the power of expanding Irish exports by a system of railway rates which would place Ireland upon a fairer footing?—All I am prepared to say is that this comparative table shows the greatness of the market and the possibility for Irish supplies to a large extent capturing that market. It likewise shows the strength of the Irish exports in certain particular lines.

33692. It shows the strength of the Irish exports, for instance, in animals, especially in cattle, sheep, and swine, but I find the import of dead meat from the ends of the earth—the most distant countries—is double the value of these exports from Ireland. Does that suggest to you that there is something in our system of transit which leaves Ireland in a position so far from commanding the market notwithstanding her favourable position for doing so?—I think that transit is an extremely important item in the cost of production, but I am not prepared to go further than I have done in the second and third paragraphs.

33691. Great Britain imports on a vast scale from Australia, America, and the most distant countries?—Yes.

33692. You have here two diagrams; I think they are extremely useful; I should hope the Commission and others interested in such questions will study them. The traffic in butter and in eggs now amounts to six millions sterling annually from Ireland?—Yes.

33693. In butter the Irish export is only one-eighth of the whole import to Great Britain, and in the egg trade the Irish export is about one-fourth?—Yes, so regards quantity.

33694. Yes. The Irish eggs are so much better than the Russian that though the Russian quantity is larger the value is less?—Yes.

33695. Just a question about those diagrams. Denmark is the only country that exceeds Ireland in the export of butter to England?—Yes.

33696. Looking at your diagram, does it appear that the reason why Denmark has beaten Ireland in the butter trade is that the supply from Denmark follows the course of the consumption from month to month—follows the course of the total import into England from month to month each year?—Yes.

33697. Whilst the Irish supply rises high in only one month and falls very low indeed in five months?—Yes; that top line shows simply the foreign import, and therefore the total consumption line of England would have to be the line reached by the English production and the Irish export.

33698. By the home production?—Yes, precisely.

33699. But, taking it as it stands, is it not apparent that the advantage that Denmark has in the butter trade is due to the circumstance that from month to month the supply from Denmark follows pretty generally the gross consumption, as indicated by the total imports?—I should say that that is one of the factors, certainly.

33700. You would say that a system of transit which stimulated the export of butter from Ireland from month to month throughout the year would greatly tend to give Ireland the control of the market?—Do you mean by "stimulates" which helps the particular seasons?

33701. Yes?—I would say that certainly would have the effect of aiding production in those seasons.

33702. I should say that Ireland needed that development in certain months, but if the supply was even from month to month that would tend to give Ireland a better position?—Certainly.

33703. You would say that Russia commands the egg trade because the supply from Russia conforms to the course of consumption from month to month as indicated by the total imports; you see the curve and general inclination of the Russian diagram follows the direction of them in the general imports?—Yes; Russia is the predominant factor.

33704. In like manner, if you had in Ireland a railway system that would develop the egg traffic, do you think it would be easy for Ireland to get to the top of the trade?—I think that if Ireland had more of a winter production of eggs it would certainly

strengthen its position, but following that line in the diagram, the Russian import of eggs is more concentrated at one particular point than even the Irish export of eggs.

33705. But does it not appear to be quite practicable by care and skill to put the leading position in these two trades into the hands of Ireland?—Yes, I think Ireland has the leading position in eggs at the present time.

33706. In value, yes, but in quantity?—In quantity no.

33707. Now, a few questions about the average railway receipts per ton. You are aware, are you not, that the reference to this Commission directs us to inquire, and indeed, it assumes the need for inquiry, as to what has retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines; and, further, to ascertain how to utilise the Irish lines more fully in the development of the resources of the country, that is, of its industries and trade. Are you aware that such is the reference?—Yes.

33708. When you say that the average railway receipt per ton of minerals and merchandise earned is a heavier item of cost to the producer and consumer in Ireland than it is to the producer and consumer in England or Scotland, does not that say directly point to the cause of the retardation of the expansion of traffic on the Irish lines?—I certainly think this fact which is shown of the higher cost and the comparatively small amount of trade that is shown on Table 6 relatively to England and Scotland, points to one of the causes of the slow economic pulse of the country.

33709. You realise that there may be explanations and therefore to account for, or to minimise the striking difference, but you say, whatever the explanation may be, the fact remains that the cost of carriage per ton is a higher cost in Ireland, and the fact, whatever the explanation may be, affects adversely the production and consumption of the country?—Yes.

33710. Do you mean that the cost of carrying a ton of goods in Ireland, being a larger element in the price of the goods than it is in England or Scotland, makes a heavier demand upon the capital of the producer and the income of the consumer?—Taking the country as a whole, that is so.

33711. So many tons cost so much to carry?—Yes.

33712. That is an undoubted fact, and the average derived from these factors shows that the individual ton, upon the whole, costs more to carry?—Yes, that carriage has to be paid by somebody.

33713. The producer; the manufacturer in the first place has to find the money for it?—Yes.

33714. But the consumer has to find the money to pay for it in the price—does not that factor alone explain the difficulty—insuperable, so far—of developing Irish manufactures?—I am not prepared to say that it does, but I think it is a factor.

33715. I cannot let so valuable a witness go without asking a little more. If the Irish manufacturer has to pay, that cost of transit forms a larger element in the price of what he has to sell, and he has to advance the cost—does not that subject him to a special disadvantage which tends to limit his manufacture?—Regarding the country as a whole, it is perfectly clear that it does.

33716. And in like manner the consumer?—And the country as consumers.

33717. Then what has retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines?—The fact that the Irish lines make a higher charge for the conveyance of goods.

33718. And how are the Irish lines to be utilised for the development of the resources of the country?—By making a charge on a fairer level with the charge in England and Scotland. To my mind the position has to be kept quite clear—the distinction between the rate and the receipt.

33719. I am not now at all upon a scientific or technical discussion of rates, I am upon the more substantial question of burden, and upon that your evidence is admirably clear. You show the distinction in a more hard way between comparison of rates and addition to cost of production. Is it not obvious that so far as transit is a heavier cost in Ireland than in England or Scotland, and does, therefore, affect adversely the production of the country, that fact accounts for the retardation of the traffic on the lines?—It is certainly one of the causes.

33716. Are you aware that in England the railways actually collect and deliver merchandise?—Yes, I am informed that they do.

33730 And that in Ireland they do not?—Yes.

33731 Except one company in a few towns?—So I am told.

33732 Very well. If this be, I find, which we find to be the average receipt per ton of merchandise carried in England in 1906 included the average charge for collection and delivery, and the Irish charge of 5s. 10s. did not, how does this affect the comparison?—I think that so far as these returns are concerned, one set, to a large extent, eliminates that, for the simple reason that the instructions which the Board of Trade issues to the companies definitely say to them that they are to exclude the charges for receipt and delivery. Perhaps I may read the actual directions, which, I think, clear the point up.

33733 Yes!—It is under the heading, "Receipts for Merchandise." Those are instructions for preparing returns under the Acts 34 and 35 Vic., c. 70, and 51 and 52 Vic., c. 35—instructions to the companies issued by the Board of Trade in connection with these statutes.—"As the greater number of the large companies already return the receipts for the carriage of merchandise, less the cost of carriage, it is requested that for the sake of uniformity all companies, including those which do their own carriage, will follow the same rule." I was puzzled myself about that point and made inquiry to find out what was the practice, and so far as the information is available—

33734 The returns, you know, purports to show the whole receipts?—Yes. But I inquired to assure myself as to what was what, because I knew there were different practices in the two countries.

33735 Then if the railway companies which do collect and deliver exclude the charges from the receipts in some manner not shown or indicated in the returns, there would be a parity as between the English companies and the Irish companies in that respect, but at present I fail to see how it can be reconciled with the assumed completeness of the receipts?—It is evident from what the Board of Trade say that they attempt at least to get the returns made up on the same basis.

33736 Chairman.—If there is anybody in the room who has got a half-yearly report of an English railway, Mr. Sexton will see at once how it is done.

Mr. Sexton (G.S. and W.R.)—There is one here of the Great Northern of Ireland, who do the same thing—less carriage deducted.

33737 Mr. Sexton.—May we take it then that the receipts as shown in the Board of Trade returns are always less collection and delivery?—So far as they have.

33738 I want to get upon the Notice in a few words the general effect of your returns. No. 1 shows that the average receipts for carrying a ton of minerals in England and for carrying a ton of minerals in Scotland last year were altogether only equal to the cost of carrying one ton of minerals in Ireland—the average cost?—Yes.

33739 That is a strange result. Some attempt was made to account for it by the suggestion of shorter hauls in England?—Yes.

33740 But there are also short hauls in Ireland, and looking at the total carriage of Great Britain, would it not require an immense volume of shorter hauls to offset the average seriously?

33741 Chairman.—You see that millions of tons carried in England are all carried short distances. They are carried to the ports for export.

33742 Mr. Sexton.—It would require an immense reduction. Short hauls is a relative term; it would require an immense number of short hauls to produce a substantial effect on the average in England or Scotland, but a relatively small amount of short hauls would produce a corresponding effect in Ireland?—The Irish total figure is very small.

33743 These things are not to be assumed. If any assumption is to be made it must be tested by careful and exact inquiry?—Precisely. I consider that these figures are put forward as a general statement which gives the material for a thorough inquiry. They do not profess to give an explanation, they simply state a fact which has got to be explained.

33744 Then the average receipt per ton on merchandise was in Ireland last year 21 per cent. over the receipt in England, and 38 per cent. over the

receipt in Scotland, and in the case of merchandise, I presume that no general suggestion of shorter hauls could not be made?—I cannot say what the railway companies say to it.

33745 Does it occur to you that whilst that plea may be suggested in regard to minerals it does not apply so obviously to general merchandise?—Not so obviously, but it does apply to some extent.

33746 I suppose you know that about two-thirds of the total imports into England come to London and Liverpool for distribution throughout the country—that does not indicate short haulage?—No.

33747 Then the average fare of the first-class passengers in Ireland is 14 per cent. over England and 16 per cent. over Scotland?—Yes.

33748 The average fare of second-class passengers is stated to be about the same in England and Ireland, but we have heard in evidence that, taking the normal third-class rate at a penny a mile, the Irish second-class exceeds that 50 to 75 per cent., but the usual excess in England is only 25 to 40 per cent.; it seems hard to reconcile those two figures?—That figure is absolutely based on the Board of Trade returns.

33749 Then as to the third-class passenger. You have already said that the average cost of carrying a ton of minerals in Ireland is as much as the average cost of carrying a ton in England and a ton in Scotland, added together. There is the average fare of a third-class passenger in Ireland about equal to the sum of the average fares of one third-class passenger in England and one in Scotland?—Yes.

33750 What significance do you attach, in addition to the figures of receipt per ton, to the miles run and tons carried in the three countries?—It shows one thing, that there is much less carried per train mile. That is capable of explanation.

33751 Taking Ireland and Scotland, the length of line is about the same, but the train mileage in Scotland is about four times as much?—Yes.

33752 That shows the paucity of the resources in Ireland?—Yes. In order to make that point satisfactory, it seems to me we should take in what the Board of Trade call the total mileage—the total track mileage. I think there has been a certain amount of confusion caused by not distinguishing between the geographical mile and the track mile.

33753 You take the length of line, do you not, here?—Yes, as that returns.

33754 But not the length of track?—This shows the length of line, but it also shows whether it is single, double, or triple line, and, therefore, enables you to get the length of track.

33755 But taking the length of line, the Irish and the Scotch length is about the same, but the Scotch train mileage is four times as many miles, and the Scotch mileage is twelve times as much?—Yes.

33756 The English length is not quite five times the Irish, but the train mileage is twenty-six times as much, and the traffic seventy times as much?—Yes.

33757 What does that indicate to you; what significance do you attach to that in reference to any conclusion that you would draw as to the relative receipts per ton?—It shows an enormous difference in the railway development of the two countries.

33758 It shows that Ireland is an extremely undeveloped country?—So far as railway traffic is concerned.

33759 A country in which greater encouragement is needed for the purpose of development?—Certainly.

33760 When you find in such a country—bearing in mind these figures—that the train mile in Ireland is made to yield as high a receipt as the train mile in England and Scotland, what conclusion do you draw? Does not that fact strongly confirm the conclusion to be drawn from the comparative average receipts per ton?—I should like to get an explanation of that first. Do you mean that the defectiveness of the statistics, in not giving us, for example, the statistics of the relative lengths of the haul of goods, complicates so much the problem?

33761 Yes, but you see the train mileage stands in a certain proportion in the three countries; the volume of traffic in Ireland stands in a very much smaller proportion to the train mileage than the volume of traffic in the other countries?—Yes.

33762 Thus, when you find the train mile in Ireland yielding about as large a receipt as the train mile in the other countries, is it not obvious that the

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Mr. W. G. B. Adams, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture.

The percentage excess of Irish passenger fares over English and Scotch.

The small load per train mile on the Irish railways points to the paucity of the resources of the country.

The disparity between the average per train mile in England and Scotland, compared with Ireland, indicates poor development of Irish railway traffic.

The necessity for greater encouragement to promote Irish development.

Paucity of traffic in Ireland in relation to the conductivity of receipts per train mile with those of Great Britain, compared with the difference in train mileage and the volume of traffic.

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Mr. W. G. B. Adams,
Secretary of
Statistics,
Department of
Agriculture.

pressure of rates must be greater?—It is certainly a point for investigation.

The following took place at the end of the *Witness's* examination:—

33749a. Mr. Sexton.—There is one point which I forgot. These returns show, I think, that in the year 1906 the proportion between the miles run and the tons carried in Ireland was an average of slightly over a ton per mile; in England over three tons per mile, and in Scotland about three and a half tons per mile, but the train mile in Ireland yields about as large a revenue as in England, and somewhat larger than in Scotland.

33750. Colonel Hutchinson. Per—4s. 6d. per train mile, passengers and goods.

33750a. Mr. Sexton.—I am putting it broadly. The train mile in Ireland yielded about as much as in England, and a little more than in Scotland.

33751. Colonel Hutchinson. Per—As much as Scotland, and a little less than England.

33751a. Mr. Sexton.—Something about the same. The average tonnage per mile in Ireland was 1, in England 3, and in Scotland 3½, but the receipts per train mile were about the same in the three countries. (To the *Witness*).—Is that so?—Yes. I know that those three figures exist, but what I am not quite certain about is the correlation of them. The mileage of goods and mineral trains, and the tonnage of goods works out as you say.

33752. It does, and then, if we say that the train mile revenue in the three countries is about the same, that raises a very serious question?—Yes, it does.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

33753. Let us just follow that point up. I think you rather accepted my friend Mr. Sexton's idea that there must be necessarily much less earned per train mile in Ireland?—That there must necessarily be much less carried?

33754. Much less load per train mile. If you did not accept it, do not?—I am not quite sure that I am following what you say.

33755. Let us deal with it in a particular case—that the average train load was less in Ireland, was the point?—The average load per train mile is less.

33756. That is to say, that the specimen train in Scotland would have more tons in it, presumably, than in Ireland. That was the assumption: if Ireland carried less tonnage in any particular train than you happened to stop on the road you would expect to find fewer tons on the Irish train than on the English train. That was the assumption?—I did not think that that was the assumption.

33757. You do not accept that necessarily?—I do not think that point stands.

33758. I think that was the point that was taken.

33758a. Chairman.—Mr. Sexton's point absolutely was that the train mile receipts for a goods train in Ireland was about the same as in Scotland, ergo, seeing that the traffic was enormously greater in Scotland than in Ireland in relation to the number of train miles, the average per ton paid by the consumer must be more in Ireland than in Scotland. That was the point, whether right or wrong, the railway will answer. I do not think that witness can answer that.

33759. Mr. Acworth.—I just wanted to ask him this. The way it strikes my mind is this: the Scotch train mileage is four times the Irish, taking it roughly?—Yes.

33760. The Scotch tonnage is twelve times as much?—Yes.

33761. If the tonnage went the same distance in the two countries that would clearly mean that the Scotch train had three tons in it for every ton the Irish train had?—If you are assuming an absolute equality of haul.

33762. If, on the other hand, the Scotch ton on the average went three miles and the Irish ton on the average went nine miles, it would not prove anything; you would have the same tonnage in the trains of the two countries?—You have got the two factors in both cases, the length of haul and the load.

33763. We have not got any figures here of haul; therefore, if any of us like to guess that the average ton in Ireland is carried three times as far as in

Scotland no one could contradict it?—That is one of the things I think an investigation should bring out.

33764. I wanted very much to ask you that. You have taken a very great interest in this question, and have investigated it as far as you can?—I have prepared the statements.

33765. You have been stuck up against this point, that we have not got the length of haul?—Yes.

33766. Do you think from the point of view of being able to give valuable statistics for guidance it is desirable that you should do it?—I do. I do not think that train mile statistics give everything, but they give something.

33767. Apart from every other point of view, do you think from the point of view of your investigations that would enable you, not to answer this question finally, but at least to get rid of some of the difficulties?—Certainly.

33768. You speak of the pressure of the rate on the consumer in Ireland as being greater; is that necessarily so?—We have agreed that we cannot discuss the distance, we cannot deal with that, but are you sure of your conclusion that?—I will take it as your own words—transport is a heavier item of cost to producers and consumers in Ireland than in Scotland?—Quite sure.

33769. Are you sure that is necessarily so?—As a general statement, it is.

33770. Let us take it and see if it need be true. For instance, there is a very much higher cost for the carriage of a ton of minerals in Ireland than in England or Scotland; we know that the gross charge is higher?—Yes.

33771. You may say that the carriage of coal in Scotland is divided into three classes, first—the carriage to the port for shipment?—Yes.

33772. There is nothing of that in Ireland, is there?—I assume there is not.

33773. There is no coal exported from Ireland. Secondly, there is the carriage to the great steel works and other big consumers. There is nothing of that on the Irish railways, what big works there are are on the sea?—Yes.

33774. Then we have the third class of carriage of coal—the carriage to the local consumer?—Yes.

33775. That is the only one of the Scotch classes of carriage that you can compare with the Irish class of carriage?—I think we are on different points altogether—what you are trying to argue and what I am trying to argue.

33776a. I think we shall agree. Go on?—My whole point is simply this. There you see the trade of the country—the quantity carried—the mileage—these you see what the railways are doing for them, there you see what the cost is to the country. There is no other great way of transport. The railways are the lines along which the traffic goes. There is your cost per ton as it were, whether it be for consumption or production; that has to be met. The object of it are another question.

33776. Yes, but I think you will agree with me that there is no export coal from Ireland that bears the pressure of heavy rates, is there?—No, not that I know of.

33777. There is no large manufactory—large industries—great coal-consuming industries, such as steel works, that are pressed by heavy rates for coal?—I do not know of any.

33778. The only thing that is pressed by the rate is what we may call local consumption?—I would not go so far as that.

33779. Other than the two classes I have named?—Under the head of general merchandise.

33780. Let us stick to coal for the moment. I will deal with general merchandise separately. There is no evidence—you have not given it, and it does not exist—that the general consumer in Scotland, in the same position as the general consumer in Ireland, does not pay a rate for his coal at least as high as the Irish rate?—That is simply a question of the general consumer of coal. I did not come prepared to give any evidence on that point.

33781. My point is this. Does your table necessarily show that the only class of consumer that there is in Ireland pays more than a similar class of consumer in Scotland?—In this particular commodity of coal, I do not think it necessarily proves that.

The Scotch
tonnage and
train mileage.
Length of
haul statistics
not available.

33702. *Chairman*.—I think you might take this very shortly. If you eliminate the coal for export and the coal to large works—gas works—in London and England generally—those are felt by consumers for domestic purposes and small factories—you can not tell whether there is more in England than in Ireland?—I have never tried to prove that.

33703. *Mr. Atkinson*.—Taking it similarly, in the case of merchandise, the average ton of merchandise in England pays less than the average ton in Ireland?—Yes.

33704. That is your figure, leaving out the length of haul, which we do not know, assuming for the moment the length of haul is the same?—Yes.

33705. Supposing I assume that the average consignment in England is fairly represented by a ton of steel castings, and suppose I assume that the average consignment in Ireland is fairly represented by a ton of butter?—Yes.

33706. Which is the heavier rate?—For a ton of iron, or for a ton of butter?—There is no question.

33707. This point I wanted to ask you is this: Is it quite reasonable, unless we can analyse the tonnage, to say that the mere fact that the tonnage charge is heavier in the one country than another proves that in that country in which it is heavier it is a heavier burden and a heavier portion of cost to producers and consumers?—So far as the particular classes go—and we can go on pulling out one class after another—it is quite conceivable that if you go on taking out class after class you may very largely reduce the cost in particular classes of consumers and to particular classes of producers—I quite admit that fact; but here is a broad fact which shows that, taking the production of the country as at stands at the present time and the consumption as it stands at the present time, we have this enormous cost of production due to transit much larger in Ireland than in England.

33708. The Irish cost of production and consumption may be less per cent. than in England if the quality of the goods, and therefore the value, is very much higher in Ireland than in England?—Anything like that is conceivable. I do not take it to be out of course.

33709. No, we none of us know; you and I both agree that we want more information.

33710. *Chairman*.—What I suggest is that the railway companies, having heard Mr. Adams, will give us a typical list of rates on general merchandise, and, if necessary, we will call someone from the English railways to give the necessary information with regard to the rates in England—the railway people will know what I mean—powered by the Normanton Conference, or the English and Scotch Conference, which are practically based on the same scale all over the country, therefore if we have that information for England, and then have similar distances in Ireland, we can draw our own conclusions as to whether the rates are higher in Ireland or in England.

Mr. Croker.—Barrington, *Solicitor*.—I did not like to interrupt but I should like to say that with regard to these tables handed in, Mr. Tatlow will go into them, and give all the information that you have mentioned. I wish to state on behalf of the companies that we entirely dissent from the inference drawn from these figures. We will see that what you require is prepared and put before you.

33711. *Mr. Atkinson*.—You were saying that the general fact that the train mile yielded as large a receipt in Ireland as the train mile in other countries showed that the pressure of the rates must be greater?—Yes, the causes of it are questions for investigation.

33712. The question whether it is a heavier pressure depends on the local prices?—That is one of the causes, certainly.

33713. We have no idea of the average value of the ton in England as compared with the average value of the ton in Ireland?—No.

33714. But we shall get it. You might get it in the statistics of the commodities in the returns but we have not got it here?—Quite so.

33715. Just one other thing in reference to the tables of import and export traffic that we have been speaking about. There is no doubt that, making all

allowance for imperfections (you have done your best—it is much the best information we have got—there is nothing as good anywhere else), it does show that Ireland is what is commonly called a creditor country—that is, it exports a balance of some four millions sterling for two years in succession?—So far as the present figures go.

33716. In other words, like England, it has claims upon other nations that they have to satisfy by imports?—England, as we know, has a very big balance in her favour. May I ask you whether that is a surprise to you? Do you mind answering that question?—I do not think I can give an answer that is satisfactory, because the figures are not complete, and I have an open mind upon it; I do not know.

33717. But it is so on the figures?—Yes.

33718. And it comes for two years in succession I think that is all?—That is all.

33719. There are only the two years. Just tell me one other thing. We have been told here—I do not know that we have had any definite evidence, but we have had a great many people who think that the rates for traffic from England to Ireland are lower, making all allowances, than the rates for traffic from Ireland to England—have you been able to form any opinion upon that subject?—No.

33720. You do not know at all; you could not say?—I could not say.

33721. You spoke of the rates, take the case of butter, for example. The butter from Ireland, unfortunately, nearly all goes in the early summer months?—Yes.

33722. That, of course, is when the butter is lowest in value?—Yes.

33723. The rates for butter are the same in June as in December?—Yes.

33724. If the Irish people would learn winter dairying, and send their butter in December, the pressure of the rate would be less, having regard to the value of the product?—Yes, it would.

Examined by Mr. ASHFIELD.

33802. In connection with the coal question, are you aware that there is a very great difference in the rate that is charged for the export of coal, say, from South Yorkshire collieries in England to the West Coast, as compared with coal for land sale. To illustrate my point, I will say this applies to the South Yorkshire coal that has got to be shipped to Liverpool—roughly speaking, we will take it a hundred miles—that coal may be carried at 5s. 6d. per ton, or slightly less, in owners' waggons, to the coast?—Yes.

33803. Is being carried that distance it passes quite a number of places to which, if coal was carried for land sale, you would have to pay perhaps even more than 5s. 6d. per ton?—Yes.

33804. You see that would create a startling lot in your figures, would it not?—Yes.

33805. Because the rate for export when such vast quantities are exported is very low, and would not compare in any way with the rate for land sale either in England or obviously in Ireland?—You mean that England has a very much larger export of coal?

33806. Quite so, and because of the low rates for export?—I am quite prepared to find that that is so.

33807. Of course, you know also that the policy of reducing rates for export has been sanctioned by the Railway Commissioners. The question has been raised, and has been fought out?—Yes.

33808. I merely want to draw your attention to the fact that that would vitiate your figures to a certain extent?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINGS, F.R.S.

33910. Just one or two questions about these tables. You point out by these tables that the difference in the open mile of railway in the case of passengers is very much against Ireland—in other words, very much higher in Ireland than in England and in Scotland; have you gone into figures as to what they bring in per train mile, passengers and goods? I do not think you have given us any table as to that?—No; I have not. If I remember rightly, they are in the Board of Trade returns.

33911. Perhaps you will correct me if I am wrong. Roughly speaking, per train mile, passengers and

Nov. 3, 1907.

Mr. W. G. S. Adams, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture.

Ireland a "creditor country" as regards the interchange of commodities with England.

No information available as to show whether Irish import or export rates are the higher.

Increased winter dairying would reduce the pressure of the rates.

The effect of the low export rate for coal on the average receipt per ton on materials in England.

Receipts per train mile for passengers and goods in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Nov. 8, 1905.

Mr. W. G. S. Adams,
Superintendent of
Statistics,
Department of Agriculture.

The receipts per open mile of railway in Ireland indicate a much smaller flow of traffic than in England.

goods in Ireland come to 4s. 6d.; in Scotland 4s. 9d.; and in England 5s. 4½d.—Yes.

33812. That is approximately correct?—Yes.

33813. In other words, the receipts per train mile of passengers approximate very nearly in Ireland and Scotland, and there is not the same rate of difference between those countries as between Ireland and England per train mile, though there is a very great difference when we come to get the receipts per open mile—what inference do you draw from that?—It shows that the amount of traffic which is coming per open mile is very much less in the one country than in the other.

33814. You show here in 1906 the number of train miles in each of the three countries, and also the number of train miles in 1900, and I think those tables show that while the number of train miles run in Ireland in 1900 and 1906 are approximately the same—very little difference—there has been a very large decrease in the number of train miles run both in England and in Scotland?—Yes, there has.

33815. There has been a very large decrease?—Yes.

33816. Would not that rather seem to indicate that the facilities given in the way of running trains, both for goods and for passengers, are very much greater in Ireland than in England and Scotland? You run a large number of train miles in proportion to the number of goods and passengers carried?—It might be that there are heavier trains run.

33817. Certainly; but it also, to my mind, points out the other fact. You show in 1900 153,000,000 train miles run in England, and in 1906 you show 123,000,000—a decrease of 20,000,000 in the six years?—Yes.

33818. That would show that there have not been so many train miles per ton of goods or passengers carried. In other words, it would seem to indicate that in England and in Scotland more attention has been paid by the railway companies to effecting economies in working expenses, and in getting as much as possible out of their train miles. Does not that follow?—It is what would appear on the surface.

33819. And I see by the last Board of Trade returns that they point out (in the 1905 returns) that for this year there has been a considerable increase in the number of train miles run over last year?—Yes.

33820. Which would show that, taking the figures for the year 1905, your figures would have been considerably less?—Yes.

33821. Of course the cost of operation of any railway is largely dependent upon the number of train miles run?—Yes.

33822. Do not those tables rather go to show that in Ireland it may be through force of circumstances over which the companies have no control—unfavourable economy is not exercised in the way of getting as much value and as much work out of their rolling stock and engines as they try to get in England and Scotland. Do you agree with that conclusion?—That is what appears on the surface.

33823. Of course as regards the mineral traffic in Ireland, I think our mineral traffic is something like two million tons a year against fifty-four million tons in Scotland, and 300 million tons in England, and our general merchandise traffic is not one-third of the Scotch?—It is 3,070,516 tons.

33824. At any rate the mineral traffic in Ireland is one-twenty-seventh of the Scotch mineral traffic, and

the goods traffic is not one-third of the Scotch; and without going into English figures, that would show that whereas our traffic both in minerals and goods is relatively infinitesimal, every effort should be made to reduce the cost of carriage on those goods to the lowest possible point?—Yes.

33825. Following up the line of questions that Mr. Sexton put, of giving as every opportunity of trying to get a better position in the British market as regards agricultural produce, and so on, I think that last year the total exports were something like fifty-one million pounds in value?—Last year the exports were fifty-one millions, yes.

33826. I was taking out the figures for 1905; and of that fifty-one millions in 1905, over twenty-two millions sterling represents live stock, agricultural and market produce?—Yes.

33827. Then, with regard to imports into Great Britain from Continental parts of food products, am I right in saying that something like twenty-two millions sterling represents these products from the Continent; Russia, five millions, butter and eggs; France, two and a half millions, butter and eggs; Holland, one million, butter; Sweden, one million, butter; Denmark, ten millions, butter and eggs; Germany, one million butter and eggs, so that these half-dozen Continental countries export into Great Britain practically as much as we do from our live stock, and our market, and dairy produce?—Yes.

33828. If you add on the imports of butter from Australia and New Zealand it would increase the total by another four millions?—Yes.

33829. You have very properly pointed out that there is an enormous possibility of this country getting a large share of that twenty-two millions, which is at present brought in from the Continent?—Yes.

33830. Provided that one could only increase the output in this country and also assist the marketing of it into Great Britain?—Yes.

33831. Further than that, am I right in saying that the exports from Denmark, the United States, and Canada, of bacon, ham, and pork represent something like £12,000,000?—Yes.

33832. Our exports of course as regards bacon and ham are something like two and a quarter millions?—Yes.

33833. So that here again there is a great field for capturing some of that trade?—Yes.

h. Examined by Sir HERBERT JENKIN.

33834. Referring to your table No. 5, you have calculated your averages on the whole of the passengers on all the railways, including light railways?—Yes.

33835. You are aware, are you not, that many light railways in England and Scotland are railways only in name, and are, in point of fact, tramways carrying passengers at tramway fares?—Yes.

33836. And also that on English and Scotch railways many millions of workmen are carried at nominal fares?—Yes.

33837. Those conditions do not prevail to the same extent in Ireland?—No.

33838. Would not that go far to explain the disparity in the average rate per third-class passenger?—It would, but that simply draws attention to the enormous difference between the two countries; in the one country you have a much greater movement of people than you have in the other country.

Mr. ROBERT PHILPOT, Secretary, Public Works Loan Commissioners, England, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Witness.—I should like to explain to the Commission that the information I can give them will be derived entirely from documents in the possession of the Public Works Loan Commissioners. At the time these loans were granted, and during the time the Board were in possession of the railway, I had not been appointed to my present office.

33839. Chairman.—I will ask you two or three leading questions, Mr. Philpot. First of all, you are Secretary of the Public Works Loan Commissioners?—Yes.

33840. And you have been in that position how many years?—Since 1883.

33841. And do you still hold the position?—Yes.

33842. Now, we have had before this Commission a good deal of evidence with reference to the Farnham

and Portman Bridge Railway, and there have been certain statements made reflecting on the action of the Public Works Loan Commissioners. I presume you are aware of the evidence that has been given?—Yes.

33843. Now, when was the application received by the Public Works Loan Commissioners in connection with this railway—the first application?—Is it the application for the loan?

33844. The application for the loan?—Well, the loan was advanced in 1867.

33845. Where did that application come from, according to the documents that you have in your possession?—From Messrs. Barrington and Jeffers, of Dublin, solicitors.

Mr. Robert Philpot,
Secretary Public Works Loan Commissioners, England.
Action of the Public Works Loan Commissioners with regard to the Farnham and Portman Bridge Railway.

33645. What was the amount of the loan?—£12,000.
33647. And that application was made to complete this particular railway?—Yes.

33648. What was the length of the railway, do you recollect?—About 12½ miles.

33649. Now, upon that application from Messrs. Barrington and Jeffers what course did the Commissioners adopt?—They obtained a report from their engineer, Sir Alexander (then Mr. A. M.) Rendel, and their solicitors, I presume, proceeded in the usual way to see that the title of the railway was right and to obtain a certificate of the shares that had been issued, of the capital that had been subscribed for and raised.

33650. Did Mr. Alexander Rendel give any estimate of the cost of the completion of the line?—Yes, he said £24,000.

33651. And did he give any estimate of the receipts?—Yes, he estimated that it would produce about £5 10s. per mile per week.

33652. He estimated the gross receipts at £5 10s. per mile per week?—Yes.

33653. And with a probability, I suppose, of an increase in subsequent years?—Yes.

33654. Now, then, the Commissioners satisfied themselves, I suppose, at that time upon inquiry through their solicitors as to the powers of the railway company to borrow?—Yes.

33655. And, having been satisfied in those inquiries they made the advance?—Yes.

33656. Of the £12,000?—Of the £12,000.

33657. Did they take any security for that money?—The security they took was the undertaking of the railway and the property and income and future calls on the shareholders, with priority over all other incumbrances.

33658. In other words, they owned and managed the whole thing?—Yes, the whole thing.

33659. That was the security for the money?—For the loan.

33660. By the way, what rate of interest did they charge?—5 per cent.

33661. And was the loan made for a term of years?—Yes, for twenty years.

33662. And any provision made for its repayment?—By annual payments of one-twentieth.

33663. Now, then, we will go on as quickly as we can. In what year was the line opened?—The line was opened in 1858.

33664. Now, was it worked as an independent line, or did some Irish railway company work it?—The Great Southern and Western Company worked it. They took a lease for ten years, or, rather, a working agreement, not a lease.

33665. The Great Southern and Western Company entered into an agreement for ten years to work the line on a percentage basis?—Yes.

33666. What was the percentage?—They were to receive 40 per cent. of the gross receipts, and 60 per cent. was to go to the Farnham Company.

33667. In fact they undertook to work the line for 40 per cent?—Yes, 40 per cent. of the gross receipts.

33668. And, now, have you any figure to show what the receipts amounted to during the ten years—what was the average every year?—The best year was 1877. In that year the receipts amounted to less than £2 per mile per week.

33669. That would be how much for the year?—£1,200 a year.

33670. How many trains a day did the Great Southern and Western Company run?—They ran two trains a day each way, being the minimum required by the working agreement.

33671. Were the Public Works Loan Commissioners satisfied with those two trains?—No, they were not at all satisfied.

33672. And the assumption was that if there were more trains there would be more traffic?—Yes. The trains were run at inconvenient times, it was said.

33673. In other words, the line was not, according to the Commissioners' opinion, worked either to the benefit of the district or that of the Company?—Yes.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—What the agreement required.

33674. Chairman.—The agreement required two trains a day.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—I think there was some objection on the company.

33675. Chairman.—It was the minimum, Mr. Barrington. (To witness).—The minimum they were to

run was two trains?—Yes, they ran an extra train on market days.

33676. At any rate the report the Commissioners got satisfied them that the line had not been worked either to the benefit of the district or that of the Company?—Yes.

33677. And that no serious attempt, at any rate, had been made to work the line to the best advantage?—Yes.

33678. Now, that takes us down to 1870. It was opened in 1858. In 1870 I believe a creditor instituted proceedings against the company?—Yes.

33679. Do you remember what it was for?—It was for the appointment of a receiver.

33680. He instituted proceedings to appoint a receiver for the railway?—To appoint a receiver for the railway.

33681. Was a receiver appointed?—Yes.

33682. I thought the line was to be worked for ten years by the Great Southern and Western Company?—Yes.

33683. At any rate in 1870 a creditor instituted proceedings for the appointment of a receiver?—Yes.

33684. And a receiver was appointed?—A receiver was appointed.

33685. Now, of course, the Commissioners, as the mortgagees of the line, had to take some action in this matter?—Yes. They established their claim as first mortgagees.

33686. Had any of the £12,000 been refunded them?—No.

33687. Mr. Awerth.—When you were recognised as first mortgagees, did not that mean that the receiver was made your receiver, or what happened?—No; he was the receiver on behalf of the creditor.

33688. There had been a receiver appointed for the creditor?—Yes, by the creditor, and we were merely recognised as first mortgagees. We established our claim to be first mortgagees.

33689. Mr. Serle.—Did you come after the creditor?—No, before him.

33690. Mr. Awerth.—Then there was no good having a receiver behind him. Did not you put in a receiver as first mortgagee?—Of course it is not a position that might happen in England.

33691. Colonel Hutchinson Per.—I suppose the receiver was appointed on behalf of you and the other creditors?—Only for the other creditor.

33692. Chairman.—The other creditor being, I suppose, the contractor.

33693. Mr. Awerth.—It is a singular proceeding.

33694. Chairman.—At any rate, the fact of a receiver being appointed, and action being taken by other creditors, compelled, I suppose, the Loan Commissioners to take some action?—No, we did not take any proceedings then; not before 1877. At that time we did nothing.

33695. Then, in 1877, is it a fact that the Commissioners filed a bill in Chancery against the Company?—Yes.

33696. And I suppose you made the usual claim upon the company for production of books and documents and everything of that sort?—Yes.

33697. Now, we will go on to the next year, 1878. The Commissioners then opened negotiations with the Great Southern and Western Company?—In 1878 the Great Southern and Western Company withdrew from possession.

33698. Yes, that was at the end of the ten years?—Yes, in 1878, November, 1878.

33699. Now, did the company when they gave up possession make any offer to the Commissioners?—The Commissioners made an offer to the Company.

33700. What was it?—No; the Company offered to take the railway over from the Commissioners as a free gift.

33701. Was that the only condition?—That was the only condition. They offered to take it over as a free gift provided it was freed from all incumbrances.

33702. Freed of all liabilities?—Yes.

33703. Mr. Serle.—And they guaranteed permanent working.

33704. Chairman.—Then they offered to continue to work it?—Yes, they offered to work it, to take it as a free gift, free from all liabilities, and to work it at 2s. a mile for two trains a day.

33705. I think that is wrong, it is "or" to work?—Yes, or to work.

Nov. 8, 1887.

Mr. Robert Plafph.
Secretary
Public Works
Loan Commission,
England.

The Commissioners
satisfied with
the working
of the
Portsmouth
Railway.

The appointment
of a receiver.

The Commissioners
claim as first
mortgagees
established.

Bill in
Chancery
filed by the
Commissioners
against the
Farnham and
Portsmouth
Company.

Withdrawal of
the Great
Southern and
Western
Railway Company
from
possession of
the Portsmouth
line in 1878.

Offer of
the Great
Southern and
Western
Railway Company
to take
over the line
as a free gift
or to work
it under a
rental
agreement.

Nov. 5, 1907.

Mr. Robert
Philpot,
Secretary
Public Works
Local Commissioners,
England.

Commissioner's personal
copy of Great
Southern
Company should pay a
minimum
rent.

Commission
given up by the working
Company, and
rolling stock
withdrawing.

Failure of all
attempts to
keep the line
open for
traffic.

The railway
put up for
auction in
1893, but not
bid for.

Abolition
at the
side of the
contractor.

Treasury
disputed to
withhold
rental payments
of the
line in 1893.

Commissioner's
discovery,
and the railway
was left
derelict.

The people of
the district
demand the line by
degrees.

Line treated
by the Commission
as a bad debt.

33002 It is an alternative proposal?—Yes, 3s. per mile for two trains per day, or 2s. 6d. a mile for three trains.

33003 Now, did the Commissioners accept either of these proposals?—No. These proposals were declined. Also there was a proposal from the Commissioners that the Company should agree to pay a minimum rent.

33004 All the proposals were declined by the Commissioners?—Yes.

33005 Now, then, there is the line without any working company. Did the Great Southern and Western give up possession of the line?—Yes.

33006 And of course they withdrew their rolling stock?—Yes.

33007 And what course was taken then?—Well, the Commissioners then took possession of the line with a view to preserve it.

33008 Yes?—And they made proposals to other railway companies to work the line, but with no result.

33009 Yes?—They also considered the question of buying rolling stock and working the line themselves or leasing it, and they were advised by counsel that they had no legal power to advance money for the purpose.

33010 And that carries us up to the beginning of 1879?—Yes. In July, 1879, the Commissioners accepted an offer from the contractor to take the line on lease, finding his own rolling stock, but the arrangement was not carried out.

33011 In the meantime the line ceased to be worked?—Yes.

33012 What was done in 1880?—The line was put up for auction and there was no bid.

33013 What was the next step?—In September of that year the Commissioners accepted an offer from the purchaser of the line by the contractor for £8,000, and a contract for sale was entered into and deposit paid. The purchaser, however, failed to complete the purchase, and after considerable delay to enable him to do so, the Commissioners determined the contract.

33014 And that seems to have taken two or three years?—Yes, 1880 to 1885.

33015 That carries us up to 1885, the line still not being worked by anybody?—No.

33016 Now, what course did the Treasury then take with reference to the line?—Well, it was decided that no further expense should be incurred in taking care of the line, and when the Commissioners suggested to the Treasury that it would be useless to incur any further expense, the Treasury agreed to withdraw from possession altogether. I may say they expended £200, the deposit that was forfeited by the contractor on his proposed purchase, and a further sum of £450, which was authorised to be expended in taking care of the line. When that was exhausted the Board suggested to the Treasury that it was no use to continue to meet expense, and the Board did not know where the liabilities would end, and they thought it better to go out of possession altogether.

33017 Then they left it to its fate?—Yes, left it to its fate.

33018 And, in fact, they gave it up, and took the caretakers, or anybody that might have been there, away?—Yes.

33019 And they ceased to spend any money upon it?—Yes.

33020 And they left the railway there?—Yes.

33021 What was the date of that, the date when they decided to have nothing further to do with it?—That was in 1885.

33022 In July, 1885?—Yes.

33023 Now, did the Commissioners hear anything about the dismantling of the line by the people of the district?—Yes.

33024 And did they take any steps to preserve it?—No, they would not take any steps, because if they had taken any steps they would have had to go into possession again, being merely mortgagees out of possession.

33025 They treated the whole thing as a bad debt?—As a bad debt.

33026 Wrote it off, and left the line to its own fate?—They thought it would be a bad debt, but they thought they might in time be able to negotiate a sale or lease of it to some other company or to a private individual, but of course they could not bind themselves to indefinite expense, and they thought it better

to leave it, because all sorts of claims and charges might be made.

33027 What became of the books, do you know?—That we were never able to find out. We saw the books, some of them.

33028 Then it is a fact that from July, 1885, the people of the neighbourhood began to find everything connected with the railway, and lost by bit by bit, disappeared?—Yes.

33029 Mr. Sexton.—The Grand Jury began it, I believe. The beginning was that part of the property was seized for rates?—Yes.

33030 Yes, the Grand Jury sent the new collector to serve it.

33031 Chairman.—And the rails were sold, I suppose. That is the whole story so far as you are concerned?—Yes, except that the Commissioners made several attempts to sell the line or enter into an agreement with the Great Southern and Western Company for them to take it over, but the only terms on which they would take it were to take it as an absolute gift free from all incumbrances, but the Board had no legal power to make a gift even if they wished except under an Act of Parliament.

33032 Surely they could give it for a nominal sum?—No; the difficulty was to that was that if they sold it for a nominal sum and if it became a valuable property afterwards, there were subsequent incumbrances who might have raised objections so far as the sale was concerned.

33033 At any rate, from that day to this the district has been deprived of any railway communication?—It has.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

33034 We have here a return of the railway loans made by your Commissioners in Ireland, which seem to have amounted altogether to about three millions?—Yes. I have not the return.

33035 And the principal amounted was £37,000, not much more than one per cent. on the capital advanced?—Well, I have not the figures before me. (Document handed to witness.)

33036 You got back all your principal except about one per cent?—Yes.

33037 Very few pounds of money got off so well as that?—Yes, we did.

33038 And your experience of your Irish loans has been very satisfactory?—On railways?

33039 Your experience of Irish railway loans has been very satisfactory?—Yes.

33040 Is the £12,000 in that £37,000 which has been repaid and written off?—No; this has only written off. It still exists as a charge.

33041 You have not given up the idea that you can still get something out of it, have you?—Well, we hope against hope itself. It has been written off the local loan fund, but it is still kept as an asset in our books.

33042 The probabilities of collecting it seem very remote?—Very.

33043 Of course you know what has happened to this line?—In what way?

33044 You know what the fate of the line has been?—We know that all the sleepers and rails have been stolen or carried away.

33045 In the first instance they were taken in a perfectly legal manner by the representatives of the local authority for rates?—Yes.

33046 Do you happen to know what the gross worth of the line represented—about £200,000?—Well, it cost £24,000.

33047 And the result of your operations has been that the line has been left derelict and of no value?—Hardly our operations. We had an interest of £12,000 in it, which we saw no prospect of recovering, and we could obtain no support from the railway company that was working it before, and what were we to do; for we could not sell it, we could not lease it, we could not give it away, or we could not get any thing out of it.

33048 The average man would be inclined, I think, to say that you, as the representatives of the public, who lent the money, were bound either to allow the Great Southern and Western to work it or to work it yourselves?—We wanted the Great Southern and Western to work it and they would not.

33049 They were willing to take it as a gift?—But we had no power to give it to them.

33050 No power?—No.

33680 But you being in Bills every year?—We could have done it under an Act of Parliament, but then we had no power to remit subsequent incumbrances.

33681 You could take the necessary powers. Surely the Commissioners could have procured the necessary powers in Parliament?—I do not know whether the Commissioners have power to wipe out other people's debts.

33682 You can do anything by an Act of Parliament. If the choice was simply between getting somebody to work the line, and letting the line become entirely valueless, any reasonable person can see which course should have been taken. Was the other £12,000 raised, the raising of which you made a condition of your loan. The Company advanced that, I think?—Yes, it was raised.

Mr. Croker, *Barrington, Solicitor*.—The Great Southern and Western gave £13,000 in hand cash.

33683 Mr. Stenton.—May I ask you who was the contractor?—The contractor who completed the railway, do you mean, for there were two contractors? One contractor came in at the end of the £24,000 that was to be expended, named Baldwin.

33684 Was the contractor the creditor?—No, he was a creditor for £9,000.

33685 I understand that there was only £10,000 coming altogether, of which £9,000 was due to the contractor?—Yes.

33686 Sir Alexander Rendel's estimate was very wide of the mark?—He estimated from £60,000 to £70,000.

33687 He estimated the line to make at least £1,500 a year?—Yes.

33688 And the best year the line ever had it made only one-third of that sum?—Yes.

33689 Do the documents in your office enable you to say whether Sir Alexander Rendel thought his estimate might have been realised?—Well, he thought that the line would have been worked in a different way altogether. He thought that there would be more trains, and he suggested that the trains should be stopped at level crossings to enable passengers to get in and out. There were only two stations—one station at each end of the line, and that would enable them to take up passengers between Parmentown and Portlanna; but this railway company, although they were asked repeatedly by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, refused to do so.

33690 Sir Alexander Rendel estimated that if the line had been worked in a suitable manner the estimate would have been realised?—Yes; so far as I know.

33691 The information in your office is that no serious attempt was made to work the line to the best advantage, and so develop the traffic?—So we were advised. In fact we had a report from Mr. Nixon, the engineer of the Parmentown Railway Company (it came to the Commissioners), and he reported in 1871 that "under the Company's present working arrangement with the Great Southern and Western Company it is my conviction that the traffic can never be made to yield any profit either for the bondholders or shareholders, in fact that the Great Southern and Western Company have worked the line during the past two and a half years regardless of developing any real traffic between Parmentown and Portlanna, as there have been only two trains per diem each way between the two towns, and they have been so managed that the inhabitants of Parmentown cannot get to Portlanna and back in a day, and the weekly passenger traffic between the two towns is now carried on by car, as it was before the railway communication was projected, and the cars carrying agricultural and other produce between the two towns remain on the public roads as numerous as they were. I have not known any railway in Ireland where the weekly traffic receipts have been under £6 or £7 per mile."

33692 Mr. Accurti.—What was the date of that?—1871. "I believe that if the railway was worked with due regard to the development of regular traffic between the towns this might be realised, in which case sufficient profit would be obtained for the payment of interest on the bonds as also on the preference share capital."

33693 Mr. Stenton.—The distance is twelve miles?—Twelve miles.

33694 And the line depended on these towns; there are no intervening towns?—No intervening towns.

33695 The ten-years' lease being up, the Great Southern and Western Railway Company came out?—Yes.

33696 And then the mortgage, having nothing to recover, came out?—Yes.

33697 And then you came out?—Yes, we came out. 33698 Is not it obvious that whatever might have been done by a better system of working, the Great Southern and Western Company lost heavily by their actual experience?—Possibly they may have.

33699 But you know that in the best year of all the receipts amounted only to £1,500 and of that the Great Southern and Western got only 40 per cent. of that sum?—Yes.

33700 That is, even in the best year, they only got £480, 20 a week, say 6d per train mile?—Yes.

33701 That did not pay them?—No. There were other possibilities.

33702 You know it was not unreasonable of the company to measure the situation not by an ideal standard but by their actual experience?—But their actual experience could have shown them that if they worked the line differently they might have made greater profits.

33703 Having found that they did not get more than £480 in the best year by the working agreement with you, when you came to ask them what terms they would accept, they asked 3d per train mile for a first-class service each way, or 2d. 6d. per train mile for a third-class service?—Yes.

33704 Is not it evident from their point of view that they lost very heavily by their lease?—Yes, they possibly might have lost, but then, perhaps, there was another object in view.

33705 You may have thought, possibly, that if they got possession of the line they would be able to make it pay?—Possibly.

33706 Is that the view?—Possibly. That is the idea that seemed to be generally about.

33707 So, because you thought it possible that the Great Southern and Western Company, who had lost so much by the actual working, could make the line pay if they got it as a gift, you persisted in demanding a rental, and by that demand you caused the line to become desolate?—What was the amount of rental that you asked?—I think we said a nominal rental. We didn't go into any figure.

33708 Yes, but about what amount?—We never came to any figure. We mentioned just a nominal rent.

33709 A nominal rent, but you do not know the amount?—No, I do not know the amount.

33710 But was it, do you think, a reasonable thing to ask a company which had done for £280 a year at most a service which, in their offer to you after the expiration of the lease, they valued at £2,500 a year, and had done that for ten years together, to ask them to pay a rent for the privilege of securing that loss?—Well, we did not look on it in that way at all. We thought it was possible they might have worked it at a profit.

33711 Well, you have not made it plain why you thought so?—Well, on the figure that we had as regards what Irish railways made.

33712 Then if you believed that, as of course you did, why did not you make some real practical effort to have the line worked?—We did. We tried to sell it to various companies and to private individuals, to Lord Rose at one time. We had correspondence with him to see could anything be done among the neighbouring inhabitants, but we never could get a purchaser at all. We tried to sell it, but we could not get anybody to bid for it.

33713 The expense of the Great Southern and Western Company was very discouraging. Did you never make an effort to get legal power to work it through your own agents?—No, we never tried to obtain power.

33714 Did the Treasury intervene in the question of obtaining power to work the line?—No, they did not intervene.

33715 Did the Treasury oblige you to come out; did they oblige you to leave?—No; we suggested to them that there was no prospect of doing any good,

Mar. 2, 1887.
Mr. Robert Pollock, Secretary, Public Works, Lower County, Galway.

Henry law to the Great Southern and Western Company by working the Parmentown and Portlanna Bridge Road way for the ten years under agreement.

Failure of the Commissioners to arrange terms with the Company to keep the railway open.

Impression of the Commissioners that the working company had not done half justice to the line.

Repeated failures to sell the line.

No legal powers sought by the Commissioners to enable them to undertake the direct working of the railway.

Treasury approval to possession being given up, on recommendation of the Commissioners.

Nov. 8, 1867.
 My Robert
 Milnes,
 Secretary,
 Public Works
 Loans Commission,
 England.

and that it would be useless to incur further expense, because of course the expense were continual, for rates and rents and repairs of bridges, and all that sort of thing, and we suggested that after we had spent about £1,200 we should go out, and the Treasury agreed.

33985. It was your own suggestion?—Our suggestion.

33987. What is your legal position now, or have you any legal position in relation to that line?—Well, mortgages out of possession.

33988. And by being out of possession you have ceased to have any real relation to it?—Yes.

33989. Is there now any owner of the land purchased for the line?—Not that we are aware of.

33990. No owner?—Not that we are aware of.

The Solicitor is the Public Works Loans Commissioner.—The Parliamentarian Company.

33991. Mr. Acworth.—We should take it that anybody who has questioned on that land for twelve years has made a good title.

Mr. Croker Berrington, Solicitor.—I think the land belongs to the adjoining owners.

33992. Mr. Stenton.—It is owned by the Parliamentarian Company, the solicitor to the Public Works Loans Board informs the Commission, but that company has ceased to exist.

Mr. Croker Berrington, Solicitor.—I understand, that having been abandoned, it would revert to the adjoining owners.

33993. Mr. Stenton.—It was stated by counsel that in point of law it was no longer available for the purpose of the line.

Mr. Croker Berrington, Solicitor.—I believe that is so.

33994. Mr. Stenton.—Have the Public Works Loans Commissioners informed themselves on that point, whether the land is now available for reconstruction of the line?—No.

33995. Does it not occur to you that if the lender of this money were anyone else except the Public Works Loans Commissioners the line would now be hardly derelict?—Well, if they had no money to keep it further, or look after it, I should imagine it would be. I may say that a private individual told me that if he had money to expend on it he would probably have put it into repair, and supplied selling stock.

33996. Do you not consider that if you could not look after the line, and if you found that you could not work the line by yourselves or your agents, it would have been the best thing to accept the offer of the Great Southern and Western Company to take it as a free gift, and guarantee its permanent working to the public?—As far as the public goes it would, of course, be an advantage.

33997. But had that the advantage of due consideration?—Well, but they have withdrawn that offer. Of course they wanted something further than that. Their further offer was made.

33998. Of course, after the line became derelict they wanted a grant to reconstitute the line?—Yes.

33999. But if you had had the discretion to accept their offer when they were willing to take the line as a free gift and to permanently work it the present state of things would not have arisen?—Yes, of course it is a thing one could not foresee; I do not know that the Commissioners would not have acted differently.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

33997. The Public Works Loans Commissioners are an English body, are they not?—Yes.

33998. They are a sub-department of the Treasury, so to speak?—No; they are independent.

33999. They are constituted by an Act of Parliament I know, but they are largely under the control of the Treasury?—Oh, not in the least; they are perfectly independent.

34000. Perfectly independent?—Yes; that is the reason they are appointed by Act of Parliament, to be perfectly independent of any influence whatsoever.

34001. But I see you say in your evidence that the Treasury decided that no further expense should be incurred?—I rather corrected that. I said that they did that on our suggestion.

34002. But they have control of the money you expend?—They control all money.

34003. Then one should imagine that the people who control the money have a control?—Well,

not a control over the policy of the Board or anything of that sort.

34004. I take it you are free to lend or not to lend without consulting them subject to statutory restriction?—Yes.

34005. But your office, and an office, as other offices of the Government, is under the Treasury?—Merely as far as the money goes.

34006. Of course your annual expenses are subject to their control?—Yes.

34007. And they have the general control that they have over other Government Departments?—Yes.

34008. And whether you reject or accept security or not, that is a matter for you?—Yes.

34009. Do you in making a loan, provided you get the ordinary rate of interest, have regard to matters of policy?—We do not fix the rate of interest.

34010. It is fixed by the market?—No, it is fixed from time to time in our case by the Treasury.

34011. The market fixes it practically?—And the Treasury fix it accordingly. But the Board considers the security of the loan.

34012. And the question of public utility does not enter into your consideration at all, provided the borrower belongs to a class that is authorized by Parliament to come to you?—Yes, that we are authorized to lend.

34013. And beyond that you do not trouble yourselves with public policy at all?—No.

34014. The result is that you do that everybody lost their money and nobody got a line?—Yes.

34015. You lost £12,000, but the result of the proceeding—I won't say your action, but the result of the proceeding was that the Great Southern and Western Company lost £13,000 in hard cash, and the contractor lost £3,000, and the local people interested in the line, in one shape or another, lost the rest of the money?—Yes.

34016. The Great Southern and Western Company had already paid £13,000 in hard cash. They had worked the line at a very heavy loss for ten years?—Yes.

34017. And, as I understand, the Public Works Loans Commissioners refused to allow them to go on continuing to incur a loss which they would have done unless traffic had increased greatly. You appreciate that they could not have worked at £2 a mile a week?—Quite.

34018. So that on their offer they were sinking £15,000, and they were ready to continue to work at a loss?—If we gave them the line.

34019. Yes. They were ready to continue to work at a loss?—Yes.

34020. And you refused that because you were advised that if they worked it differently they ought to have made something like 25 or 37 per mile a week?—No; we refused it, because we had no power to give it to them.

34021. How many Irish Mills have there been in the last forty years, five or ten per annum, and could not you have put a clause into one of them?—Yes.

34022. Then you did not take steps to do so because you were advised that if they had worked it differently the receipts would have been three times as much?—No; we thought we might get something out of this line if we sold it or leased it elsewhere.

34023. Shall I say an ounce of flesh?—More than that. We had an offer of £25,000 for it.

34024. Of which the offerer thought better?—Of course. The contract fell through, because they could not get the rolling stock, because the Company who were giving the rolling stock would not put money into the country. It was, in fact, in consequence of the disturbed state of the country that they would not put money into it.

34025. And the result was that nobody would venture £25,000 on it. You will agree with me that it would have been more to the public interest if you had foregone all claims?—More to the public interest.

34026. You speak of yourselves as first mortgagees?—Yes.

34027. What is a first mortgagee of a railway. Do you get special powers more than an ordinary private person who invests his money in first debentures?—No, but there is a lender in front of them.

34028. You are aware, of course, that you cannot mortgage a railway?—You cannot mortgage the rolling stock.

34029. If you or as private investors lend our

The acceptance of the Great Southern Company's offer to take the line as a gift would have been preferable to abandonment.

The closing of the line a public disadvantage.

Constitution and powers of the Public Works Loans Commissioners

money on debentures Parliament provides that the same detail whether we get our interest is to be subordinate to the public interest to have the line worked?—Yes.

34023. But I gather that in this case you had extra power that an ordinary creditor would not have been allowed?—I do not think we had any extra power.

34024. That is what I wanted to understand, were you given special power as mortgages to enter into possession, or were you merely first debenture holders as any other person would be on a railway?—Just the same as any other person; no difference.

34025. Then you were only first debenture holders?—Yes, first mortgages. We had special power under our own Act as mortgages.

34026. Perhaps the solicitor would tell us?—The Solicitor to the Public Works Loans Commissioners.—Special powers in connection with this. We were first mortgages of the undertaking, over the dues and unpaid calls, and so on.

34027. Mr. Aspinall.—But how could you mortgage the dues of a statutory railway?—I don't understand?—I think you will find in the Act of Parliament authorising the construction of the railway that there was special power given to mortgage it.

34028. To anybody?—Yes.

34029. Is it a power subject to the ordinary powers in the Railway Clauses Act, a debenture power which does not give the power to foreclose, or is it something special?—The Commission had power which enabled us to go into possession of the line under the provision of our special Act.

34030. That is what I thought. In other words, the Government that is supposed to be lending for the public interest takes a security as a creditor that it won't allow the ordinary public who invest their money to take it?—We have special powers.

34031. I do not know that I ought to ask Mr. Phillips to express an opinion on that. I only wanted to get out this fact. But I dare say Mr. Phillips does agree with me that it would not tend to encourage other people to put money into an Irish railway behind a first mortgage, being the Government?—Possibly not.

34032. Just one other question. I dare say you know that since 1871 a very large number of railways have been built of the class of the Portman railway all over the country?—Yes, light railways.

34033. I dare say you are aware that £5 or £7 a mile has been beyond their utmost dreams; that in most cases their receipts have been far less?—No, I am not aware of that.

34034. So that the estimate of your advisers has been falsified by results?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. ASPINALL.

34035. Did Sir Alexander Rendel go over this line himself?—I think he personally inspected it.

34036. Did you send any person on your behalf?—We sent Sir Alexander Rendel.

34037. But in addition to Sir Alexander Rendel?—No.

34038. It seems difficult to understand why you did not accept this offer of 1873. The Great Southern and Western seems to have made a very fine offer?—To take it over?

34039. No, but to work it with two trains per day at 3s. a mile or three trains per day at 2s. 6d. Why did you not accept that?—Because we calculated that as the line was made we should lose about £1,000 a year over it.

34040. I cannot see why in the public interest it was not accepted. I dare say I am the only individual in this room who has walked over every yard of that railway. Having seen it some years ago, I cannot see why such an offer was not accepted?—Well, if the gross receipts were no more than in 1877 we should become liable to pay the Great Southern and Western Company about £1,000 a year.

34041. Mr. Staines.—You are speaking of the free gift?—No, leasing. They offered to take it as a gift free from all incumbrances, and we should have had to wipe out all incumbrances behind us and to get an Act of Parliament to enable us to give it to them.

34042. Mr. Aspinall.—But with that power as mortgagee you could have foreclosed the people below you, is not that so?

The Solicitor to the Public Works Loans Commissioners.—I do not think the first mortgage would

have been justified in absolutely giving away the security, knowing that there were other people behind.

34043. Mr. Aspinall.—You asked some other companies to work it for you?—Yes.

34044. And you ultimately put it up to auction?—Yes.

34045. And was not the very fact of the other people refusing to do anything an indication to you that if you had gone back to the offer of 1873 you would have got the line reasonably worked in the interest of the public?—I do not think we considered that.

34046. Clearly anybody who knows the line or looks at the map must see that the only company that could work it would be the Great Southern and Western?—The Great Southern and Western, yes.

34047. And that being so, taking a reasonable view, it seems difficult to understand why you did not accept the offer?—Well, we thought there might be a private offer.

Examined by Colonel HUYCHESON P.E.

34048. I think you said that you were independent of Treasury control?—Yes.

34049. And that they exercised merely the power of the purse?—Yes.

34050. Did you bring before them an application for a grant of £12,000 for the construction of this line?—The Treasury have nothing to do with the amount of a loan. If there was an application made to us for a loan it would come entirely under the Commissioners' power to deal with it. The only power they would ask would be the sanction of the Treasury.

34051. But the Treasury advance the money?—Well, we have the money, because it is a revenue every year derived under our Act.

34052. A certain fixed sum?—A certain fixed sum.

34053. And with that you can act as you like?—Yes.

34054. Independently of anybody?—Independently of anybody.*

34055. Had you ever anyone to represent your interest as to the way in which that money was expended on your behalf?—Not that I am aware of.

34056. Does not that seem rather a strange state of things that a department lending money in this way, and who are not acquainted with the circumstances of Ireland, that they should lend money, no matter what the amount is, and should absolutely have no voice as to the way in which that money or other moneys subscribed for particular purposes is expended, does not it strike you as being rather a curious state of affairs?—Well, we do not see it as a rule.

34057. But in this particular instance you gave £12,000 and the Great Southern and Western £25,000, and the contractor £2,000, that is £39,000 spent on that line which was originally estimated by Sir Alexander Rendel to cost £24,000, is not that so?—No, it was in respect of the completion of the railway.

34058. The money was lost apparently?—Yes.

34059. No one apparently had any voice in the manner as to how the money was spent, except the Great Southern and Western and the Portman Company?—And the Portman Company.

34060. And you were bound to have your interests in their hands?—Yes.*

34061. Now come to the year 1871. In 1871 you had a report from your engineers pointing out that the traffic was being worked in an unsatisfactory manner?—The company's engineers.

34062. They reported to you?—It came to us.

34063. And from that time till 1878, when the Great Southern and Western Company's lease expired, you apparently, from what I gather, took no steps to represent the matter to the railway company?—We had no voice in the working of the railway.

34064. From first to last apparently, beyond lending the money, you seem to have exercised no voice?—No.

34065. As to how the money was spent and how the line should be worked?—Not how the line should be worked.

34066. Have you any connection with the Board of Works in Ireland?—No.

34067. In respect of such matters as railway construction and others?—No.

34068. At any rate, when 1878 came, at that time the Great Southern and Western Company had been running the line at £1,200 a year?—Yes.

Nov. 8, 1897

Mr. Robert
Fidport,
Secretary,
Public Works
Loans Com-
missioners,
Belfast.

The relations
existing between
the
Loans Com-
missioners
and the
Treasury with
regard to the
advance of
loans.

No provision
made by the
Loans Com-
missioners to
control the
expenditure of
the money
lent the
Portman
Company or to
interfere in
the working
of the line.

No connection
between the
Board of
Public Works
(Ireland) and the
Public
Works Loan
Commissioners
(England).

* Note.—See supplementary statement in Appendix No. 26.

Nov. 8, 1907.

Mr. Robert
Philip,
Secretary,
Public Works
Local Commis-
sioners,
England.

Refusal of
the offer of
the Great
Southern and
Western Rail-
way Company
to work the
Festiniog
line for a
payment of
£s. per train
mile.

A loss of
£1,000 per
annum to
Com-
missioners
involved.

Scope of the
evidence.

Continental
countries
visited.

Notes and
conditions of
transit on
State lines
investigated.

Publication of
French maximum
railway
rates.

Notes of
firing actual
rates in
France.

34075. And I take it that the offer they made was to take the receipts and to pay 3s. a mile, is not that so?—No; they offered to work the line for 3s. for two trains each day, or 2s. 6d. for three trains.

34077. And take the receipts?

34077a. Mr. Stoeck. —There were two offers.

34078. Colonel Hutchinson Pce.—The Commissioners were to pay the Great Southern 3s. a mile?

34078a. Mr. Stoeck. —Per train mile.

34079. Colonel Hutchinson Pce.—What would that come to in the year?

34079a. Mr. Stoeck. —£2,500 a year.

34080. Colonel Hutchinson Pce.—You were to take the receipts. I do not suppose you were to pay the Great Southern and Western Company so much for working the railway, and they were to take the receipts as well. You were to take the receipts?—Yes.

34081. At that time the gross receipts had been £1,300 a year?—Yes.

34082. And the company were manifestly losing £1,300 on the working, by that showing, and they lost the interest on the £13,000 which they had advanced?—Yes.

34083. That was £400 a year?—Yes.

34083a. Mr. Stoeck. —They were really costing more than £1,300 a year on the working, because they got only 40 per cent. of the receipts.

34084. Colonel Hutchinson Pce.—They were losing the interest on £13,000?—Yes.

34085. In the light of subsequent experience, I should say if you were given the same offer over again you would, in the interest of the public, I presume, have accepted that offer?—Well, on the gross receipts as they were then we should lose £1,000 a year if we had accepted it, and I do not think we should have accepted it.

Mr. PHILIP MacNULTY, Transit Inspector, Department of Agriculture, examined by the CHAIRMAN.

34092. Mr. MacNulty, you are Transit Inspector, Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland?—I am one of the Transit Staff.

34093. I think you have been deputed by your Department to make inquiries and reports with reference to subjects germane to our inquiry?—Yes. In pursuance of the promise made by Mr. Cantrell at one of the sittings, I was sent to the Continent to make investigations as to Continental rates and transit conditions, and I have now the result of my inquiries here contained in statements which show full details.

34094. Let us go by steps. First of all, have you made inquiries with reference to the State control of railway rates?—Yes.

34095. Where?—I visited seven countries.

34096. Will you name them?—France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Denmark, Austria, and Hungary.

34097. Am I right in assuming that in visiting these countries you have endeavored to make yourself acquainted with the State control of railways?—Yes, so far as control over rates is concerned.

34098. And also the general traffic working regulations?—The general traffic working regulations in each country.

34099. And the tariff conditions?—And the tariff conditions.

34100. Will you tell us what conclusions you have arrived at with reference to State control of railway rates?—With regard to conclusions, I have not made any deductions at all. My instructions were simply to communicate the material facts.

34101. Will you tell me about the maximum railway rates. Under what authority are they made in the countries you have visited?—In France the maximum rates are contained in a charge book which is issued by the State to each large company. The working rates and conditions are in the first place proposed by the railway administration, but they must have the approval of the Minister of Public Works.

34102. Mr. Stoeck. —By working rates you mean actual rates?—Yes. The working rates are in the first place proposed by the railway administration, but they must have the approval of the Minister of Public Works, even though the rate be only for three months; three months is the shortest period for which rates can be made in France. For rail-

34096. I gather that you have now withdrawn and wiped off the whole debt?—We regard it, of course, as a bad debt.

34097. In the Loan Commissioners' account there is £37,000 written off, and that £37,000 which is written off is made up of two sums, £24,471 for 4d. in respect of the Waterford, New Ross, and Wexford Railway, and £12,444 8s. 4d. in respect of the Parnestown and Portmarna Railway?—It is written off as an asset of the loan fund, but not of our assets. We regard it as a debt still. We have applied to have it written off. It has not been written off. It had to be rectified by Act of Parliament.

34098. And I presume it has been?—No.

34099. At any rate that sum of £37,000 is made up of these two particular items, £24,471 in respect of the Waterford, Wexford, and New Ross Railway and £12,000 in respect of this particular line, so that I think probably in the event of this Commission making any recommendation as to the working of the line your department will hardly be in a position, as if they are in a position, they will hardly be anxious to exercise any power with regard to that £12,000?—No; I should say not.

34100. Only one other question. With regard to the remainder of the £2,800,000 which you have advanced from time to time to railways, was any of that money advanced under all analogous circumstances to those with respect to this particular railway?—I could not tell you offhand.

34101. I think it was not. I think that probably, as far as I have gone into the question, this particular instance was the only one in which with regard to money advanced practically to a new company, you exercised no voice?—No.

ways of local interest and terraces it is the Prefect who confirms the working rates, etc. The right of direct confirmation has been reserved in only two cases—in the case of railways conceded by the State, and in cases common to several lines.

34102. Chairman.—You are now referring to the practice in operation in France?—Yes.

34104. There are independent railways in France, are there not?—Yes.

34105. And these are State-owned railways?—Yes.

34106. And these are guaranteed railways?—Most of them have guarantees.

34107. Take a railway that has no guarantee and is not under State control—the Northern of France; do you know anything about that?—Yes; its charge book contains the same maximum tariffs as all the other large lines.

34108. That is what I wanted to get at. The Great Northern of France, which has no guarantee?—But the same maximum tariff as the guaranteed lines. I was coming to it in the next paragraph. The maximum rate fixed for quick transit on the large railways is a uniform rate.

34109. Mr. Stoeck. —What does quick transit mean?—Grande Vitesse; I use the equivalent; I have distinguished between quick transit and slow transit.

34110. Slow transit means ordinary goods rate?—Yes. It is practically the same distinction as we apply to perishable traffic by passenger train and traffic by ordinary goods trains.

34111. Chairman.—With that explanation, will you please proceed?—The maximum rate fixed for quick transit on the large railways is a uniform rate of 36 centimes per tonne per kilometre—that is per ton of 2,205 lbs. avoidance—metric tons.

34112. Can you not give us that in the English equivalent?—Yes. I am attaching to the statement of my evidence, which I will hand in, an equivalent table. If I had given the English equivalent every time I refer in my statement to foreign rates or foreign monies it would have taken me another three months to work out the figures. To my statement of evidence there will be attached an equivalent table, so that anybody who wants to get information as to the English equivalent can work it out.

34113. You talk about the maximum rate fixed for quick transit. All we want to know is the rate of operation. Is this the rate in operation?—I will

give that in the chapter on calculation of freight charges.

34114. What are the tariffs fixed for the slow transport?—The maximum tariffs (exclusive of accessory fees, such as registration, handling—that is loading and unloading—and other charges, which will be defined later on) fixed by the rate-book for slow transport on the State and other large railways are—for goods in Class 1, per ton and per kilometre, 15 centimes; goods in Class 2, 14 centimes; goods in Class 3, 13 centimes; goods in Class 4, for journeys up to 100 kilometres, with a maximum tax of 5 francs, the rate per ton per kilometre is 8 centimes; for journeys from 100 to 200 kilometres, with a maximum tax or charge of 12 francs, the rate per ton per kilometre is 5 centimes; for journeys of more than 200 kilometres the rate per ton per kilometre is 4 centimes. That finishes France with regard to legal maximum rates.

34115. There are four classes according to these?—Yes; four classes.

34116. And the 1st class, instead of being the lowest, as it is in England and Ireland, is the highest in France?—Yes.

34117. Coldest Netherlands Fee.—You say "exclusive of accessory fees"—Yes. They will all be defined in another chapter of my evidence.

34118. Does the maximum rate fixed for the fast service include these extra charges?—It is inclusive.

34119. The fast service rate includes these extra charges?—Yes, except registration fee.

34120. Mr. Serfati.—This applies indifferently to all the large lines?—Yes. The working rates are much lower. These are the maximum.

34121. Whether worked by the State or by independent parties with a guarantee or without?—Yes. Some of the small lines of local interest and importance have special maximum charges. I do not deal with those because we have not very much to compare with them in Ireland.

34122. Chairman.—I suppose that these charges compare in your judgment with the maximum charges which every railway company has in its private Act of Parliament?—Yes—just as regards the amount, but as to their nature.

34123. Mr. Serfati.—You said 8 centimes for a journey of less than 100 kilometres with a maximum tax of 5 francs. What does that mean?—I give it literally as it is contained in the tariff book.

34124. If I saw the French I might understand it, but I do not understand it at all now.—In Class 4 there is a surcharge fixed which will explain it, I shall come to it again when I deal with the classification of goods. Class 4 will show the surcharge, and you can then see what is the relation of the maximum tax.

34125. Coldest Netherlands Fee.—Has it anything to do with the tax which they levy on passengers and goods?—It is not a tax in that sense; it means the maximum freight.

34126. Mr. Serfati.—I suggest that what it means is that it is 8 centimes per kilometre, provided that any distance which would work up to and over five francs is only to be charged five francs?—That, I think, is the clear meaning of it. That is all I have to say about France.

34127. Chairman.—Now, with regard to Belgium, what are the rates there?—The only information I could get with regard to Belgium is that the rates and conditions of transport are fixed on the State railways by a special law or in virtue of the general transport law of 25th August 1821, and on the conceded railways and light railways they are fixed by the governing authorities within the limits of the specification of maximum charges and with the approval of the proper Minister, with the exception of the modifications agreed to in virtue of a special law. There is no information in the published documents or books of the railway showing the maximum rates fixed. None of the books that I saw contained the slightest reference to the actual figures.

34128. Did you make any inquiries of the Minister of Public Works?—With reference to this?

34129. Yes?—It was from the Minister of Public Works that I got my information, or rather from the gentleman who put me in charge of for the purpose of getting it. This is the reply which was given. So far as the State railways are concerned, the actual working rates are their maximum rates. For the light railways there is a concession granted, and this concession contains the maximum rates. I was not able to get a copy of the concession.

34130. As any rate, you have no information with reference to maximum charges in Belgium?—None, except to tell you generally how they are arrived at or how they are fixed.

34131. You cannot tell us the amount?—I cannot tell you the amount of them.

34132. Then, with regard to Germany?—In Germany there are no statutory maximum rates. Each State railway administration fixes its own rates.

34133. Mr. Serfati.—There are no maximum rates?—No.

34134. Chairman.—What do you mean by Germany?—I am speaking of Germany as a whole.

34135. Have you dealt with Prussia especially?—I have selected Prussia for the purpose of a comparison with regard to rates for agricultural produce. As regards Germany, there are no statutory rates; that applies to the whole of Germany. Each State owns its own railway in Germany. You have Prussia, and Saxony, and Bavaria, and so on, each with its own administration, and the railway administration in each State fixes its own rates.

34136. The railways are State-owned?—They are State-owned. As regards conceded railways, that is, privately-owned railways, Article 96 of the Law of Railways enacts that for the first three years after the 1st of January following the opening of the railway the company has the right to fix the rates for the conveyance of passengers and goods. It must, however, submit the rates to the Government for acceptance. Under the concession treaty for broad-gauge secondary railways—

34137. What do you mean by that?—They are branch lines as distinguished from main lines. They are described as secondary railways. Under the concession treaty for such railways it is provided that for the first five years after the 1st of January following the opening of the railway the concessionaire has power to fix rates for passengers and goods. Subsequently the fixing and alteration of tariffs is subject to the approval of the State supervising authority.

34138. Do you mean to say that for the first five years they can charge what they like?—Within the powers named in the concession, of course. In all concessions there are provisions as to rate-fixing, and they can charge what they like within the powers of their concessions.

34139. You began by saying that there were no State maximum rates?—For the whole of Germany. Each State practically forms an administration in itself. There is a difference between the Empire and the State.

34140. Take Saxony, for instance. Do you mean to say that there are maximum rates in Saxony?—They must be fixed for their own State railways. As a matter of fact rates in Prussia and Saxony are practically on the same basis.

34141. What do you mean by saying that for the first five years they may charge what they like?—The Government does not interfere with them so long as they are acting within the limits of their concession.

34142. How?—After five years there is a limitation. The fixing and alteration of tariffs is subject to the approval of the State supervising authority—the State in itself, Saxony or whatever it may be. So long as the railway is of purely local interest, the Minister of Public Works will fix maximum rates for the different goods classes with special reference to the financial state of the enterprise. That is in exercising his power after the first five years.

34143. These are all State railways that you are speaking of now, are they not?—No; these are under the Concession Treaty for secondary railways. Secondary railways are private lines, and that power is exercised by the concessionaire of these privately-owned lines.

34144. Are they light railways?—They are broad-gauge, but of a secondary nature. Then there is a provision that the concessionaires of these light railways, if I may so term them, are bound to accept the tariff system existing on the Prussian State railways and to follow the principles governing the same in making through rates in so far as it is thought desirable by the Minister of Public Works.

34145. Do you wish to say anything more about Germany?—No; that completes the information I got about Germany. I did not get as much information in some countries as in others.

34146. Now, as to Holland?—In Holland all

Nov. 4, 1900.

Mr. Philip MacKinnon,
Transport
Inspector,
Department of Agriculture.

German
railways—

No statutory
maximum
rates in
force.

Each State
administers its
own railways.

Regulations as
to privately
owned lines.

Fixing of
rates subject
to the State
supervising
authority.

All through
rates work
most second
with the
Prussian State
Railway tariff
system.

Nov. 8, 1867.

Mr. Philip
MacNeill,
Taswell
Inspector
Department
of Agricul-
ture.

The Dutch
railway
State owned,
but leased
to private
companies.

All rates sub-
ject to
approval of
the Ministers
of Waterways
and Works.

Dutch
railways:—
All railway
rates and con-
ditions of
transport fixed
by the Min-
ister of Public
Works.

Maximum
rates
specified.

The three
systems of
transport, slow,
quick, and
express.

tariffs must be sanctioned by the Minister of Waterways and Works under Article 23 of the general law. These rates are prepared by the railways for the Minister's approval. All the power of initiation lies with the railway.

34146. Are there any private railways in Holland?—Yes. The State railways are leased by the State to a company to work, and the Holland railways enterprise is a private one.

34147. Mr. Awerdt.—The Holland railway lines belong to the State?—No. These are the Dutch State Railway.

34148. The Dutch State Railway and the Holland Company line belong to the State in both cases?—I am given to understand that the Holland Railway is a private line, but that the Dutch State Railway is as you describe.

34149. It was, but they now all belong to the State. But there is none of them worked by the State?—No, none of them worked by the State.

34150. Chairman.—How are they worked?—They are leased out for working to a company.

34151. But all the rates have to be approved by the Minister?—Yes; by the Minister of Waterways and Works.

34152. Is there one company or firm that work the whole of the railways?—No; different companies; there is one called the Holland Railway Company.

34153. Where does that line run from and to?—There is a network of lines; I could not give it to you offhand. The Holland Railway have their main offices in Amsterdam, and the Dutch State Railways have them in Utrecht.

34154. Mr. Awerdt.—There are only two working companies for practical purposes—the State company and the Holland company.

34155. Chairman.—At any rate, whoever works them, you do not know anything about the conditions under which they work them?—No; I did not go into that at all.

34156. You do not know who supplies the capital for extension or improvements?—No.

34157. You do not know whether that has with the State?—No, I do not know anything about the capital arrangements at all.

34158. Now take Denmark?—In Denmark the rates and conditions of transport are fixed by the Minister of Public Works both for State railways and for privately-owned railways or conceded lines. The following are the maximum rates authorised by the State railways. The conveyance rate per 100 kilograms computed weight must not exceed for quick goods 2 ore per kilometre with a constant—an equivalent, I suppose, to our station terminal—of 50 ore; for slow goods 1 ore per kilometre, with a constant of 15 ore; for quick goods in wagon loads 1 ore per kilometre, with a constant of 15 ore. For slow goods in wagon loads it is 0.5 ore per kilometre and a constant of 6 ore.

34159. What do you say is the equivalent of "constant"?—Station terminal. I take that from the description given to me of it. The term is used in all the countries.

34160. For quick goods it is 2 ore, and for quick goods in wagon loads it is 1 ore, or just half?—Yes, that is so for conveyance, and the constant for quick goods of less than a wagon load is 50 ore, while for quick goods in wagon loads it is 15 ore.

34161. Mr. Awerdt.—Are these actual rates or maximum rates?—These are the maximum rates authorised.

34162. Chairman.—But not charged?—The charged rates will come in later on. These are the authorised rates.

34163. In fact, these are the powers which they possess for charging?—Yes.

34164. They must charge within these limits?—For normal traffic. There are some special rates probably. I am not sure about Denmark; they have comparatively few special rates in Denmark. Express goods are conveyed at one and a-half times the quick goods rates, so that there are three systems of transport—slow, quick, and express. For long distances the rates may be substantially reduced, and lower rates may be charged for slow goods in large consignments and for such wagon-load goods as judged by their value and condition are known to require a lower rate than the usual wagon load rate. To meet this the State railway has divided wagon load goods into three sub-classes, which will be defined in the classification of goods.

34165. Did you make any inquiries with reference to the slow, quick, and express goods, as to what was considered slow, quick, and express?—It will be defined when I go into the classification. I was in a difficulty to know exactly where to draw the line in heading my evidence so that it could be understood.

34166. You had better tell your own story. You say that there are three classes in Denmark?—There are three classes for wagon load goods, arranged according to the conditions I have just stated. Easily perishable goods, which come under the heading of the most important necessities of life must be conveyed with extra speed, with the limits, however, made necessary by the conditions of transport, and shall be charged as under: When carried as quick goods they are charged at slow goods rates.

34167. That is for perishables?—Yes; they are defined as the most important necessities of life. When carried as express goods they are charged at quick goods rates. Used packings are conveyed at a low rate fixed by the railway company with a minimum charge.

34168. What are used packings?—All kinds—fish boxes, and things of that sort.

34169. Empty?—Yes; the term "used packings" covers all kinds. Need I go through these rates?

34170. No?—The next rate is for small parcels, corresponding practically to our own stamped parcel system.

34171. Mr. Awerdt.—Are you still giving the maximum rates, are they not the actual rates?—No; these are the maximum rates fixed by the railway administration, and the maximum prices beyond which they cannot go. Really they are the basis of their normal rates.

34172. Chairman.—What do you say about parcels?—Stamped parcels shall be conveyed between all stations, stopping places and booking offices when they have the following Government railway stamps of 35 ore each affixed. Parcels up to 5 kilograms must have one stamp.

34173. What is the cost?—It is one-hundredth of 1s. 18d.

34174. Mr. Awerdt.—It is about half-a-farthing.

34175. Mr. Sexton.—One-twentieth of a penny?—Yes.

34176. Chairman.—Very well?—Parcels over 5 kilograms, up to 10 kilograms, must have 2 stamps; over 10 kilograms, up to 15 kilograms, 3 stamps; over 15 kilograms, up to 25, 4 stamps. These stamps are sold in sheets of 25 at 6 kroner per sheet.

34177. That applies to all parcels up to 25 kilograms?—Yes.

34178. That is 50 lbs., is it not?—A kilogram is 2.2 lbs.

34179. Colonel Hutchinson Pei.—50 make a cwt, roughly.

34180. Mr. Awerdt.—It works out at 50d each.

34181. Mr. Sexton.—The small scale is up to half-a-cwt?—Yes, for stamped parcels.

34182. Does that correspond to our Post-Office parcels?—Yes, and the London and North Western system. You can buy stamps and put the necessary freight on your own parcels before handing them in.

34183. Colonel Hutchinson Pei.—Does that apply to any distances?—Between all stations, regardless of distance; it is practically the parcels post system.

34184. Mr. Awerdt.—It is from the station, is it not?—No, it is between all stations.

34185. They are not collected and delivered, the parcel is not at all like the postal parcel here?—No, but I would rather you did not take that definitely from me.

34186. Chairman.—Are these stamps for parcels available over all the railways?—No, only the Government railways. I have taken the maximum rates for a private railway in Denmark—the South Funen.

34187. That is a new railway, is it not?—There has been one section of it opened during the last year or two, but the other part of it has been built. I should think, 20 or 30 years.

34188. Are you going to give the rates for parcels on that particular railway?—Yes.

34189. Do you know the length of the railway now?—It must be nearly 100 miles. Packages up to 2½ kilograms require a 15 ore stamp. For other weights the charges are exactly the same as on the State railways.

34190. Never mind the intermediate rates; take the first and the last?—Up to 2½ kilograms a 15 ore

stamp is required, and from 15 to 25 kilograms four 25 are stamps are required—the same as on the State railway.

34187. But are they sold in the same way as the other stamps?—Yes, at every station.

34188. But they are the property of that railway?—Of that railway, yes. On the same railway for small goods and wagon load goods—small goods being consignments of less than a wagon load, the term will occur very frequently throughout my evidence, and it will refer to goods consigned in less than wagon loads. The transporter could not find a word for the German term which would bring it in as well as "small goods."

34189. *Colonel Hutchinson Pat*—What is a wagon load?—Wagons are of different sizes—3, 10, and 20 tons.

34190. *Mr. Asworth*—Had you not better clear up the distinction that exists over the whole German Union, where the wagon-load means ten tons broadly, the half wagon-load means five tons, and anything below that is a small consignment?—The railways do not describe them as half wagon loads.

34191. I think they do?—I have not come across the expression, and I have had translations of any number of tariffs.

34192. *Chairman*—I was under the impression that the German system was by complete and incomplete loads.

34193. *Mr. Asworth*—There are three scales—half-wagon loads, five-ton lots; wagon loads, ten-ton lots, and anything below five tons is "small."—On the South Finsen Railway these goods are carried on all parts of the railway except the Svendborg Nyborg section at the following rates per 100 kilograms for consignments of less than wagon loads. First goods, Rate 1, the constant charge is 50 ore.

34194. *Chairman*—That is loading and unloading?—No, the constant is a station terminal, not a series terminal; loading and unloading charge is a series terminal. The conveyance charged for each of the first 60 km. is 1.6 ore; for each of the following kilometres, 1 ore. Slow goods, constant, 16 ore; conveyance for each of the first 60 km., 0.8 ore; for each of the following kilometres, 0.5 ore. Then there is a slow goods reduced rate.

34195. What does that mean?—I will define it in classification. I can give it you now if you like?

34196. No; go on?—Slow goods reduced rate, constant, 12 ore; conveyance for each of the first 60 km., 0.6 ore; for each of the following kilometres, 0.4 ore. The next rate is for wagon-load goods, with a minimum rate of 5,000 kg. (five tons roughly) constant, 6 ore; for each of the first 60 km. the conveyance charge is 0.26 ore; and for each of the following kilometres, 0.15 ore.

34197. I do not think you need give me the exceptional rate for the small Svendborg Nyborg branch?—No, it is a short section. Easily perishable goods are charged as follows:—(1) Charged at ordinary freight or slow goods rate when carried at fast goods train speed; (2) charged at slow small goods rate, with 50 per cent. added, this being done by an increase of calculated weight instead of by an increased rate, when they are carried at the greatest speed allowed by the time table, but not conveyed by fast trains. The minimum weight charged for is 30 kg. They are charged at fast goods rate when conveyed as express goods. Used packings come next; shall I say anything about them?

34198. No; you need not touch that point?—That that finishes Denmark.

34199. Now about Austria?—With regard to Austria I have not any figures, but I will read the information given me. The older charters of concession prescribed maximum rates for different classes of traffic and in many cases for individual articles, but owing to altered traffic conditions the existing rates are much lower than the maximum. In the newer deeds of concession which apply to local lines no maximum rates are fixed, but the regulation of tariffs is provided for by the condition that the latter are subject to the sanction of the State, the public interest on the one hand, and the financial success of the railway on the other, being taken into consideration. In accordance with a statute of 14th September, 1854, the State is empowered to effect a reduction of rates if the net annual profits of a line exceed

15 per cent. of the invested capital, and in the case of various private railways the deed of concession provides that the right of the State to reduce tariffs may be exercised even before the foregoing limit has been exceeded by the net profits.

34200. *Mr. Section*—That is, without regard to the profits?—The 15 per cent. need not be regarded.

34201. Now any percentage?—No.

34202. *Chairman*—What about Hungary?—The rates and fares of the Hungarian State railways are fixed by the Minister of Commerce. The private railways fix their own rates and fares within the limits of their Acts of Concession, but these rates are subject to the approval of the Minister of Commerce. I could not get a copy of any Act of Concession; they are private Acts, which contain the maxima. That fixes the maximum rates section, I have not been able yet to prepare what is really the most important part of my evidence—that is, a comparison of the actual working rates of Ireland with those in the different countries I visited.

34203. That is the most important point in the whole business?—I have brought to show as an exhibit a set of comparison sheets for ten commodities—artificial manures. (*Roll of documents exhibited.*) I would like the Commission to see what it means to prepare anything like a comprehensive comparison of the different commodities conveyed in Ireland. There are here twenty-one sheets, each containing about fifty rates. These rates had to be culled out by the Department of Agriculture from the railway companies' rate-books in use at the different stations. After we had taken the rates out, we had to analyse them into distances, and then work out a comparison with the rates of the different countries for traffic carried under like conditions. These sheets refer to only one commodity. We propose to make an exhaustive list of comparisons.

34204. I think I can shorten this considerably. We will take the publication of rates. A great point has been made of that particular question by witnesses before us, who have complained that they have great difficulty in knowing what the actual rates are. Tell us, in a few words, whether in France, rates having been agreed to and sanctioned by the Minister of Public Works, they are published?—Yes, they are.

34205. And do they contain all the rates that are in operation on the railways?—All the rates. Every rate is published.

34206. Are the books purchasable by the public?—Yes, practically at a nominal charge.

34207. That is the system at France?—That is the system in France.

34208. Is the same system in operation in Belgium?—Yes.

34209. What sort of charge is made for the rate-book? Is it a heavy charge?—In Belgium, for the State railways, it is only about a franc or a franc and a-half.

34210. Have you seen them?—I had to obtain them all to take out the rates.

34211. Then you have seen them?—Yes.

34212. Could you, if you were a trader, ascertain what you would have to pay for your goods travelling over the Belgian railways?—Yes.

34213. From those books?—Yes.

34214. So that the tariff is, in your judgment, explicit?—Yes.

34215. *Mr. Asworth*—Do I understand you to say that the book you get in Belgium for about a franc and a-half contains all the special rates in force in the country?—Yes.

34216. Have you one?—Yes, but not here.

34217. *Chairman*—And is the same system in operation in Germany?—Yes; all tariffs are published.

34218. Throughout the countries you visited the goods rates are published in book form, and can be purchased by the public?—Yes.

34219. Is that so?—Yes.

34220. *Mr. Aspinall*—Would you mind asking the witness how that is done, because, taking the rate-books of one company—the 1883 rate-books—I find in one case I know of that they actually weigh 150 wt. 3 gr. 17 lb., and occupy 47.7 cubic feet of space.

34221. *Mr. Section*—At one station?

34222. *Mr. Aspinall*—At the head station of the company. And as the company have to keep their 1883 rate-books, because they cannot alter their rates

Nov. 9, 1907

Mr. Philip MacNelly, Transport Inspector, Department of Agriculture.

Method of fixing the rates and fares of the Hungarian State and privately owned railways.

Comparison of rates deduced from the collected data to be prepared by the Department of Agriculture.

Railway rates in France and Belgium published and purchasable by the public.

Nov 8, 1907.

Mr. Philip
MacGillivray,
Inspector,
Department of
Agriculture,
Dublin.

Railway rates
in France and
Belgium
published and
purchasable
by the public

more than can be justified over those in operation at the end of 1892. They have to keep another set which weigh 8 cwt. 3 qt. 4 lb., and occupy 25-30 cubic feet!—Are you speaking of Irish rate-books?

34220 No; English. I want to know how this foreign rate-book is published and gets over this difficulty?—Because they work nearly all their traffic on mileage scales; even their special rates are on mile scales.

34221 Mr. Serres.—Can you tell us how these portable Continental books are made to contain all the rates?

34222 Mr. de Worth.—You are, no doubt, familiar with the French rate-book?—The one including all, or the divisional one?

34223 The one including all. Should I be correct in saying that there are two volumes, that the two books together are exceedingly closely printed, that they contain four or five thousand pages, that they are about the size of that despatch box on the table, and that they cost about 20 or 30 francs?—About 25 francs; but that includes every rate in operation in France on every railway—State, private, large, small, tramway—for passengers, dogs, horses, carriages, cattle, goods, everything that can be conveyed on a railway; you have it all in that book.

34224 In two volumes?—Yes.

34225 Do I understand you to say that the whole of that information is given in Belgium in a book that can be published for 15 francs?—The State Railway Rate-Book is a small thing about the size of the Irish Classification Book.

34226 And that contains, you believe, all the special rates?—Yes, it contains the special rates. They have about 50 special rates. They give a mileage scale and commodity lists on which reference is given to the scale.

34227 Special rates in that sense, yes, but do you suggest that it gives the exceptional rates that are available only from one station to another?—Yes, point to point rates.

34228 They are given also?—They schedule certain points and give reference to a mileage scale.

34229 But where there is quite an exceptional rate, for instance, for German iron coming to Antwerp, or something of that kind?—It is contained in this book, which is about the size of the Irish Classification Book.

34230 Chairman.—That is so far as the publication of rates is concerned. Now, with regard to the variations in rates and transit conditions. I am going to ask you a few general questions, without going into the whole of the point I have before me. Do I understand that when a rate is once fixed there is no means of having it altered, except by application of the railway company to the Minister of Public Works or the Minister of Railways?—In every case before a rate can be altered sanction must be obtained from the Minister, who has the power of raising it.

34231 Such cases as we have heard of in Ireland, for instance, where a ship arrives with a cargo of grain, and special low rates are quoted to enable that grain to be sent into the interior—such a case could not arise in France, say, because it would take months to get a special rate fixed?—You mean for a special consignment?

34232 Yes?—One special consignment?

34233 A special cargo?—In France in such an exceptional case, in regard to the import or export of anything that seriously affects the prosperity of the country, the railway company has power to bring a rate five that into force in five days by merely notifying the Minister.

34234 Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—In twenty-four hours is one case, I think.

34235 Chairman.—That is sufficient. Exceptional cases of that kind can be met very quickly, the rate subsequently being communicated to the Minister?—Yes. In that particular case the rate is sent to him, and if he has not notified his disapproval of it within a certain time it is put in operation.

34236 For instance, in Ireland, the Chamber of Commerce in Dublin, or Belfast, or elsewhere, might have a question before them and come to the conclusion that a certain industry might be developed if certain low rates were fixed by the railway company. What would be the *modus operandi* in France in such a case as that, if a Chamber of Commerce sug-

gested a reduction of rates for certain articles? What would they do first of all?—They would bring it to the notice of the railway company first.

34237 Then what would the railway company do?—The Chamber of Commerce would communicate with the consulting committee.

34238 The consulting committee of what?—of the State or of the railway company?—It would go to the Minister of Public Works.

34239 We are talking of the State railways?—No, they are privately-owned railways.

34240 All of them?—Yes.

34241 Then take Belgium; I think all the ordinary railways in Belgium belong to the State?—The proposals of the Chamber of Commerce would go to the Minister of Public Works. The Minister of Public Works has then examined by a Committee composed of the Inspector of the commercial working of the district, the Controller General, the port engineers, and the Inspector-General of Railways.

34242 Mr. de Worth.—This in France?—Yes.

34243 The Chairman asked for Belgium?—The proposals as to the rates are sent to the consulting committee for railways. For very important cases a Commission is drawn up in this Railway Committee, and in its name a report is presented to the General Assembly. That is in very important cases of rates. The representatives of the parties interested and of the railways are heard, the committee gives its opinion, and the Minister gives his decision, usually conformably to the Committee's advice.

34244 Have you not omitted that, if it is a proposal for a reduction of a rate—as it probably is if it comes from a Chamber of Commerce—it cannot come up to the Ministry unless the railway company back it, nobody can propose a reduction except the railway company?—The Minister can make representations to the railway company.

34245 Yes, but nobody except the railway company can propose a reduction?—That is so; I have that here.

34246 Unless the railway company sends it forward it is stopped, because the railway company stands on its own statutory rates?—That is so. I have it here. When once a rate is confirmed it cannot after be suppressed by the company except by a proposal of withdrawal duly confirmed. On the other hand, this withdrawal cannot be forced on the railway.

34247 The Chamber of Commerce has really to get the railway company on its side before it can do anything more?—Provision is made for the decision of the Minister being given.

34248 But it cannot come before him unless the railway company back it?—Really the only way in which it can be brought about is by the withdrawal of a rate and the substitution of a new one for it.

34249 The new one would have to be higher?—No. Since 1897 the Minister of Public Works grants only a provisional confirmation of the rates, which he reserves to himself the right to withdraw when he thinks fit.

34250 If he withdraw a rate that was in operation the result would be to send the railway company back on its statutory maximum, which is higher?—That is so. But they say that this dual control has worked fairly well, because the railway companies find it to their interest to work amicably with the Minister of Public Works.

34251 Mr. Serres.—This is very important. I want to have it clearly understood whether or not the Minister in France has any power to reduce rates?—No, he has not. He cannot arbitrarily reduce a rate upon a railway company, but if a proposal for a reduced rate is put before him he consults the committee for railways, and has their observation upon it; both sides are heard at an inquiry, and he gives his decision. But the rate must have been agreed to by the railway company before he can give a decision.

34252 Can he withdraw a rate?—Yes.

34253 Is it correct that in that event the railway company are restricted to their maximum rate or does the Minister substitute a new one?

34254 Mr. de Worth.—It need not be the maximum?—He can refuse to sanction any rate.

34255 Mr. Serres.—So that the withdrawal of a rate obliges the substitution of some rate?—They cannot fall back on their maximum as a working rate.

34256 Mr. de Worth.—There is always in existence the statutory maximum rate, which may never be applied. But suppose the Minister withdraws a special

Rates and
lowest con-
sultative rates
issued by
Minister of
Public Works
and Railways.

Provision
made for the
prompt issue
of special
rates in
urgent cases.

rule, or withdraws his sanction to a special rate, the result is to send the trader back to the ordinary rate, which would be higher than the special rate. Supposing, for the sake of argument, the Minister withdraws his sanction to that also, the only legal rate would be the statutory maximum, which would be higher still.—That is not my reading of the law. Every working rate must involve the sanction of the Minister, and the maximum rate is not a working rate.

34253. Quite so.—Therefore the approval of the Minister must be obtained to their applying the maximum rate as a working rate.

34254. The maximum rate is under Act of Parliament.—Working rates must not be beyond the maximum. The maximum was only fixed as a limit beyond which they must not go.

34255. Of course, the question never arises, but that is the legal position; if the Minister withdraws his sanction to a rate you go back to the ordinary tariff, which, *ex hypothesi*, would be higher.—Even the maximum cannot be applied as an actual working arrangement without the Minister's approval of it.

34256. You will not find that to be so, I think?—I think it is so.

34257. Mr. Sturges.—What is the practical effect; has the Minister practical control in that he can make a reduction of the rate?—In practice, yes, because the railway companies will meet him; they will make an arrangement.

34258. Chairman.—I want to see what the practice is in Belgium. In Belgium, as a State railway, can a rate be advanced without due notice being given to the public?—No. Fifteen days' notice must be given; it must be published in the *Moniteur*.

34259. Of an advance in the rate?—No Ministerial decree approving or modifying the price and conditions of freight may be put into effect until after the lapse of fifteen days.

34260. That is a reduction?—"Varying" would be a better word to use. No decree varying a rate can be put into effect until after the lapse of fifteen days.

34261. You do not follow my question. Please have your proof and tell us from memory—I have had to put so much matter into my memory that I could not like to depend on it.

34262. I am speaking of the State railways in Belgium. If a rate is to be reduced three everybody gets notice of the reduction by its being published?—Yes.

34263. It is published in an official document?—Yes.

34264. And there is fifteen days' notice?—Except in the case of international freight, imports and exports, where the time limits are reduced to twenty-four hours.

34265. Mr. Sturges.—Can they advance a rate without giving notice to the public in Belgium?—There is no distinction made in the information given me in Belgium between advancing and reducing; the same will apply, I presume.

34266. Chairman.—I have it in these notes that in the case of an advance in the rate at least three months' notice must be given?—You are quite right. That shows the disadvantage of not allowing me to look at my notes.

34267. In regard to every variation of a rate, whether it is increased or whether it is advanced, everybody knows about it, because it is officially published in the *Gazette*?—Yes, you are quite right; I have it in my notes here.

34268. There is sufficient margin of time allowed for everybody to know of it?—Yes. In the case of any raising of a rate three months' notice at least must be given.

34269. Is it practically the same in the other countries?—There is one exceptional point in my notes in regard to Holland.

34270. What is it?—About the State having arbitrary power to reduce rates at any time.

34271. We know that?—If, in consequence of such reduction of tariffs, the net profits of the owners are reduced, they receive an indemnity out of the State Treasury. The amount of the indemnity to be paid is, when such a reduction is obvious, and when an amicable arrangement cannot be arrived at, settled by the judge. In no case is indemnity awarded to a larger amount than is necessary in order to bring the net profit of the year or years for which it is demanded up to 3 per cent. of the company's capital. That is the only country in which I found such a condition.

34272. That perhaps is the only country in which railways owned by the State are leased to private individuals?—I do not know of any other country where it is done. The circumstances are different in Holland?—Yes.

34273. Then with regard to equality of rates. I will get rid of these sheets in two or three questions. Did you make any inquiry with reference to this subject?—Undue preference was one of the subjects of inquiry.

34274. Did you find that throughout the countries you visited there is no preference given to any particular individual, that what is given to one is given to all?—It must be given to all under like conditions. The law is practically the same as our own.

34275. In all these countries?—Yes.

34276. Let us see if we cannot settle this question about money value. You have given us some figures which on the notes will mean nothing at all unless we can get the equivalent figures in English money. Have you this sheet? (*Shew header*)—Foreign money and their equivalents exhibited?—Yes, I have a copy of it here.

34277. You mentioned, first of all, France, with kilogrammes, centimes, and so on. I suppose we all know their equivalents. But I want to get an explanation of the rates you have given, and which are on the notes, with reference to Denmark, for instance?—The weight is the kilogramme, 1,000 kg is the French ton.

34278. Is that the same in all countries?—Yes, all the countries in the comparison. And the French ton is equal to 2,205 pounds avoirdupois. As to money in France, the franc is equivalent to 2s. 2d.

34279. You may omit France?—Belgium is the same as France for both weights and money.

34280. Germany?—It is the same for weights throughout all the countries. The mark is a shilling, is it not?—Not quite; it is 11/16th actually.

34281. In Holland, what about the weights there, are they the same again?—Yes, as regards weights, and the guilder or florin is equal to 1s. 8d.

34282. Denmark?—The krona is equal to 1s. 1/2^d, and the øre is 1/100 of a krona. Austria and Hungary, the krona is equal to 10d., and the heller is 1/100 of a krona.

34283. With regard to the classification of goods, you have told us about quick goods, slow goods, and express goods. What are the conditions attaching to the quick goods?—The conditions of transit?

34284. Yes?—That goes away from classification altogether.

34285. I am on the classification of goods now?—Goods are divided into six series in France.

34286. You mean six classes?—There are four classes according to the Act of Parliament, but they are subdivided into six series, and the rate is struck on the series, not on the class. As far as I could analyse them, they came out as this way:—Series 1 corresponds to class 1, series 2 and 3 are contained in class 2, series 4 and 5 are contained in class 3, and series 6 in class 4. From an analysis of the classification that I have made—I need not go through it—it will be seen that it is simply by assimilation of goods that the series are arranged.

34287. In that classification general in France?—Except for small lines, where there is a much simpler classification—on steam railways, etc.

34288. Never mind the steamways. Series 1 is the highest class of goods?—Yes.

34289. Corresponding to our class 5 in English classification, is it not?—That is so.

34290. You might, I think, give us a typical article or two in each class, just to show us what you mean. For instance, take an Irish product, take class 1, which is the highest?—Fresh butter.

34291. Fresh butter comes into the highest, does it?—Yes, in series 1. Berries and brooms, biscuits, candles, fresh flowers, fresh fruit.

34292. That is the highest rate of all?—That is the highest rate of all by goods slow transit.

34293. That is a most extraordinary classification. I see it includes goods that are in three or four different classes in the English classification?—Yes. In some cases there is 50 per cent. added to the ordinary rate; for instance, for fresh flowers and live rabbits.

34294. And baskets? Yes, and saddlery, and dead and live poultry.

See A, 1907.

Mr. Philip
McNulty,
Inspector,
Department of Agriculture.

Undue
preference
is shown as
between
continental
railways

Continental
weights and
measures and
their English
equivalents
explained

French
system of
classification
of goods

Assimilation
of the classes
rather as
compared with
the English.

Aug. 8, 1907.

Mr. Philip MacNulty, Transit Inspector, Department of Agriculture.

German classification of goods.

Perishable goods requiring quick transit charged at the highest rate on Continental railways.

French railways—regulate these for the general calculation and conditions of quick and slow transit.

The rates in operation on the State railways lower than on the privately-owned lines.

34287. You have fresh butter and eggs in the Series I, which is the highest rate?—Yes.

34288. Where have you got salt butter?—In Series 3, I think?—Series 3, which also applies to such commodities as tanned leather, condensed milk, new potatoes, flax, and grain in sheaf.

34289. And Series 5?—That corresponds to our Class A, and includes coal, manures, phosphates of lime, sand, superphosphate of lime, turf, fuel, post office, and basic slag. That is the lowest rate.

34290. Looking at it casually, I see that really all the perishable goods are in the highest class?—Yes.

34291. In Germany, is the classification somewhat similar? There are nine classes, I recall?—Yes, there are nine classes in Germany. There are express goods, comprising commodities of every description, and without limitation as to weight; fast goods, all goods which are not contained in a special tariff; a special tariff for certain goods by fast train; slow goods, ordinary package rate, with certain exceptions; then there is an exceptional lot, for which there is a reduced tariff. In wagon loads, there are four main classes: Class II, special tariff I, special tariff II, special tariff III. These rates all apply to a minimum weight of ten tons. To these four ten-ton wagon load classes there are three sub-classes. The sub-classes apply to the commodities in the main class, when the weight is only 5,000 kg. per wagon.

34292. Practically, the system appears to be, from what I see here, that all perishable goods requiring quick transit are in the highest class and charged at the highest rate, and that there is a considerable difference in rates for full wagon loads of ten tons and five tons, and lots under five tons?—Yes, that is so.

34293. That is generally the system throughout the continent?—Yes. With regard to Germany, they have a special tariff for certain fast goods, which includes butter, buttermilk, field or garden produce, fresh vegetables, skim milk, fresh fruit and plants.

34294. Shall I find any argument?—Yes; all figures will be given later on.

34295. That is everything with regard to the classification of goods. Now we come to the calculation of freight charges. What are the conditions of quick transit in France?—The regulations for the general calculation and conditions of quick transit are the same as in the slow. Quick and slow are the same, so far as general conditions are concerned. As regards fractions of weight, packages up to five kg. are charged as five kg.; packages from five kg. to ten kg. are charged as ten kg.; packages exceeding ten kg. are charged per indivisible ten kg.

34296. What is the minimum in Ireland?—Up to seven pounds, I think, is the minimum rate for passenger train.

34297. Mr. Ascroft.—You were talking about ordinary goods traffic?—Quick transit.

34298. Chairman.—That is, mixed train?—Yes; you cannot call it passenger; "express" corresponds to our passenger train.

34299. Mr. Ascroft.—The definition is "a speed corresponding to that of a passenger train"?—Yes.

34300. Chairman.—You have given us the pseudo rates?—I think that would correspond probably to the perishable by passenger train, for which the minimum charges are for a hundredweight, I think.

34301. We have had the minimum weight; what is the minimum distance charged for; I think it is six km., is it not?—The minimum distance charged for is six km.

34302. Every fraction is charged for as a full kilometre?—Yes.

34303. I suppose you found that the conditions vary in the different countries you visited, with reference to special rates?—Yes.

34304. But the conditions as to what I call complete and incomplete loads—five tons and ten tons—is applicable throughout?—Yes.

34305. That is to say, there is a low rate for ten tons, a slightly higher rate for five tons, and a great deal higher rate for lots under five tons?—That is so.

34306. And that is general throughout the countries you visited?—Yes.

34307. Did you notice any great difference between the rates in operation on the State railways in France

and the other railways?—Yes. The State railway rates are lower than the others; that is, the rates in operation.

34308. The rates in operation are lower on the State railways than on the other railways?—That is the privately-owned.

34309. Mr. Ascroft.—Can you give the ten-mile rates on the different systems?—I believe I have them.

34310. Colonel Huddleston-Poe.—But the proportion of State railways in France is very small compared with the privately owned?—Yes. I have the figures here. For Series I—

34311. Mr. Ascroft.—Have you got the figure of the ten-mile of traffic which is given in the ordinary French report—the ten-mile receipts of the whole line for the half-year or year?—The average?

34312. Not—I have the actual tariff here.

34313. Never mind the tariff. Have you got the figure which you would get in any French report, giving the average ten-mile receipt?—No, that would be no use as regards each series.

34314. No, but it would be a general figure, it would be a comment on the statement you have just made, and we could see the difference between one company and another?—I could give it, putting units against units.

34315. I am not interested in that, because I do not know what is in the series?—I can define it.

34316. What is the average rate?—I have not touched the average rate in any country.

34317. Then, what does the statement that the rates are lower on the French State railways mean?—The basis of calculation of rates is lower per ton per kilometre on the State railways than on the other railways.

34318. For calculating all the rates?—For each series of goods carried by slow train.

34319. That is the basis of the actual normal tariff; is that what it is?—Yes.

34320. Of course we should want to know what percentage of the traffic went on the normal tariff before we knew what interest that had?—Yes.

34321. Mr. Series.—You give the different classes of goods, do you not?—Yes.

34322. Mr. Ascroft.—But you cannot tell what percentage go at normal rates, and at what exceptional?—No.

34323. Chairman.—I asked whether the rates were lower on the State railways than on the privately-owned, and the witness said yes, there was a material difference, he said that he could give the various rates for the series on the two classes of lines, and that given the same classification the rates were lower on the State railways.

34324. Mr. Ascroft.—But what we want to know is this: Supposing ten per cent. of a series go on the normal tariff, and ninety per cent. on the exceptional tariff, though the normal tariff of the State railway may be lower, if the exceptional tariff on the other railway is lower it may much more than counter-balance the difference. We cannot settle that point from the statement about the normal tariff.

34325. Mr. Series.—Have your inquiries led you to think that, as the normal tariff on the State railway is lower, the exceptional rates on the State railways would be lower also?—I can find out. I have the tariffs.

34326. That would be the inference?—Yes. But as regards the special rates, I have not touched them at all, I have only taken the basis of calculation as I said down. What I proposed to do hereafter was, where I used special rates in comparison with actual working rates in Ireland, to give the full conditions attached to such rates. I did not go into the details of the actual working rates.

34327. Mr. Ascroft.—I must apologise for asking so many questions at this stage, but I feel that if the witness goes now, as I have not those papers before me, the evidence will really convey nothing to my mind at all. Could we have the documents printed before Mr. MacNulty comes back?

34328. Mr. Series.—I could not attempt the task of addressing any questions to Mr. MacNulty until I had read his memoranda.

34329. Chairman.—The simple question I put was this, and the witness answered it perfectly correctly, that there was the same classification, the same series, exactly, and that where butter and eggs and so on were carried they were charged more on the privately-owned railways than on the State railways.

34336. *Mr. Aswerth*.—He has not said that.

34336. *Chairman*.—Yes.

34336. *Mr. Aswerth*.—He has told us that there is a lower tariff, but whether any traffic goes at it he has not told us; he does not know.

34337. *Colonel Hutchinson*.—Is it not a fact that, with regard to the proposed acquisition of a railway in France, one of the great objections which the railway companies make to the acquisition of that railway by the State is that they do charge much lower rates on the State portion of the railways?—Yes.

34337. *Colonel Hutchinson*.—That is one of the great objections the railway companies have against the proposed purchase.

34338. *Lord Pirrie*.—That does not answer the question.

34338. *Mr. Stoen*.—Seeing that the State railway normal charges are lower, it has upon those who suggest that there are, on the private lines, exceptional rates which have a counteracting effect, to show it.

34339. *Mr. Aswerth*.—There is no one here whose duty it is to defend the one set of railways or the other; we are here to get at the facts, and I am pointing out that we have not got the facts, which might upset the statement as to there being lower rates on the State railways.

34339. *Colonel Hutchinson*.—I understood Mr. MacNulty to say that the rates in operation on the State railways were considerably lower in every direction, for both passengers and goods, than on the private lines.

34340. *Mr. Aswerth*.—I think you will find the position is this—that it is quite true that the normal

tariff is lower, but it is not necessarily true, and I do not think it is in fact true, that the special rates are lower. Therefore, the really important question is what proportion of traffic goes at the special rates and what proportion at the normal rates?

34340. *Lord Pirrie*.—Does Mr. MacNulty know that?—I have not worked that out, because I have not made a comparison of special rates.

34341. *Chairman*.—You are putting questions which cannot possibly be answered by the witness.

34341. *Mr. Stoen*.—The comparison is very important.

34342. *Chairman*.—I should say that the special rates would show the same proportion?—I could give a statement of the special rates on the State railways compared with the special rates for like commodities on the other railways in France. I cannot give it now, but I can prepare it.

34342. *Mr. Stoen*.—It is obviously necessary that the Commission should have an opportunity of reading that statement, as well as the general memoranda, and Mr. MacNulty can be questioned upon them at a future date.

34343. *Chairman*.—Do the railway companies require all this?

34343. *Mr. Orrer Barrington, Solicitor*.—I think if it is done in the way that you suggest it will suffice. All that you think necessary to elicit will appear on the notes, and we shall have it before us and be able to answer anything that is necessary. If, on the other hand, these voluminous documents are printed the railway companies should have them, and it would take a great deal of time to consider them.

34344. *Chairman*.—It would be very troublesome to print all those documents. It should be done by question and answer if possible.

Nov. 8, 1907

Mr. Philip MacNulty, French Inspector, Department of Agriculture

The proportion of the traffic carried at special and ordinary rates

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FIFTY-SIXTH PUBLIC SITTING.—SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9th, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Offices, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—SIR CHARLES SCOTTER, BART, CHAIRMAN; SIR HERBERT JENKIN, K.C.M.G., Colonel W. HUTCHINSON FOS, C.B.; MR. THOMAS SEXTON, Mr. W. M. ACWORTH; and MR. JOHN AUDLEY FREDERICK ARTHALL.

MR. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

MR. PHILIP MACNULTY, Transit Inspector, Department of Agriculture, further examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Nov. 9, 1907. 34364. I find that I omitted to ask you anything yesterday about passenger fares.—Yes. I have a statement here upon that subject.

34364a. It is rather important that we should have some of these facts on the notes; therefore I will ask you a few questions upon them.—I might explain that the statement contains the unit rates per kilometre in some countries, and per mile in others.

34365. I think you might go through these very shortly. Take, first, the unit charge per kilometre in France.—1st single, 11.2 centimes; 2nd single, 7.56 centimes; 3rd single, 4.628 centimes. 1st return, 16.8 centimes; 2nd return, 12.096 centimes; 3rd return, 7.3948 centimes.

34365a. Is it necessary to carry it out to so many figures?—The end figures would probably make a difference when you came to work out the actual fares for long distances.

34366. These are the rates in France?—Yes.

34366a. Now give them for Belgium.—1st single, 9.45 centimes; 2nd single, 6.3785 centimes; 3rd single, 3.75 centimes. 1st return, 15.12 centimes; 2nd return, 10.205 centimes; 3rd return, 6.048 centimes.

34367. Can you give us Germany now?—This is the Prussian State.

34367a. Yes; they are all the same?—It is from the Prussian State book I have taken these.

34368. Mr. Jenkin.—What is the date at which you got these?—For Prussia I got there in December, but they gave me the revised rates that were to come into operation on May 1, 1907. In the Prussian State, the unit charge per kilometre is—1st single, 7 pf.; 2nd single, 4.6 pf.; 3rd single, 3 pf., with the following excess charges made for conveyance by fast trains: from 1 to 75 km. 1st class, 4 mark; 2nd class, 3 mark; 3rd class, 2 mark. From 75 to 150 km., 1st class, 1 mark; 2nd class, 1 mark; 3rd class, 1 mark. Over 150 km., 1st class, 2 marks; 2nd class, 2 marks; 3rd class, 1 mark.

34368a. These are amounts paid in addition to the fares?—In addition to the fares I have just quoted.

34369. Now, Holland?—Holland. 1st class single, 5 cents; 2nd single, 4 cents; 3rd single, 2.5 cents. 1st return, 8 cents; 2nd return, 6 cents; 3rd return, 4 cents. I should have mentioned that in the State of Prussia and in the State of Saxony they have a 4th class, which is charged on the basis of 2 pf. per kilometre for conveyance in slow trains only.

34369a. Mr. Arthall.—The seat tax in Germany has been abolished, has it not?

34370. Colonel Hutchinson Fos.—That was done away with on May 1 this year in view of this new tariff.

34370a. Mr. Arthall.—But there were two changes—a change which abolished the seat tax, and a change which put on 10 per cent.

34371. Colonel Hutchinson Fos.—That was taken off this year; it came into force in July, 1906, and was taken off in May, 1907, in view of this new tariff.

34371a. Chairman.—What are these excess fares—are they the seat tax?—No; they are for conveyance in fast trains.

34372. I do not think it is necessary to give all these figures in regard to Denmark?—There is a long table.

34372a. Just take the unit charge per kilometre up

to 100 km.—1st single, 6.8 ore; 2nd single, 4.3 ore; 3rd single, 2.5 ore.

34373. Are there no return tickets?—No.

34373a. Now take from 107 to 225 km.—1st single, 10.15 Kr.; 2nd single, 6.40 Kr.; 3rd single, 3.75 Kr.

34374. Now take the last one, for over 625 km.—1st single, 21 Kr.; 2nd single, 13.25 Kr.; 3rd single, 7.75 Kr.

34375. Are there any excess fares there in addition to these rates?—Yes.

34376. They just give us those?—In local journeys in one of the following districts—I had better give the names as they are pronounced here—

34377. Give a typical case?—Within any one of the districts (1) Sjælland-Falster, (2) Fyn, (3) Jylland, it is 80 ore 1st class, 50 ore 2nd class, and 30 ore 3rd class.

34378. That is sufficient?—But on through journeys between the districts it is much higher; it is 1 Kr. 30 ore 1st class; 60 ore 2nd class, and 30 ore 3rd class.

34378a. Mr. Jenkin.—There are excess fares for conveyance by fast trains; you said local?—

34379. Chairman.—They are extra charges on express trains.—The first set was for local journeys within a district; the second set are for through journeys between the districts—excess charges.

34379a. Is it the case on an express in a local district?—Yes.

34380. Now take Austria—the unit charge per kilometre?—Up to 150 km. by fast or express train, 1st class, 11.75 heller; 2nd class, 7.25 heller; 3rd class, 3.60 heller.

34381. Now by slow train?—By slow train, 1st class, 8.40 heller; 2nd class, 5.04 heller; 3rd class, 2.60 heller.

34382. You have given us up to 150 km. Then there are varying charges, what are they for over 600 km.?—Fast train, 1st single, 10.752 heller; 2nd single, 6.878 heller; 3rd single, 3.912 heller.

34383. Now for the slow train?—1st single, 7.328 heller; 2nd single, 4.032 heller; 3rd single, 1.728 heller.

34384. Mr. Jenkin.—Does the charge you have given for the over 600 km. distance mean the charge for the whole 600 km., or the charge after making the full charge for the first 150 km.?—Do you mean, is it cumulative or the rate charge per kilometre from the beginning?

34385. You gave the rate for over 600 km. Would you have to multiply that figure by 600, or would you have to pay the charges for the previous rates up to 600 km.?—You would multiply the rate distance by the actual unit which I have put opposite it.

34386. None of the countries you have just mentioned—Germany, Belgium, or Austria—has any reduction on return tickets, has it?—There are no return tickets in Austria.

34387. Now in Germany, are there?—Germany has none.

34388. Chairman.—There are no return tickets in Germany or Austria?—No.

34389. Have you made any inquiries in reference to market tickets? Yes. But I have not yet mentioned Hungary in connection with ordinary passenger fares.

34390. It is practically the same as Austria, is it not?—There are points of difference.

Dutch railways.

34371. Just take the first!—The first is the local zone, 1 to 10 km.

34372. In Hungary there are none, and the zone is 1 to 10 km.—That is the first zone for local traffic, the second is 11 to 15 km.; and the third, 16 to 20 km.

34373. Have you the figures for the local zone?—Zone No. 1, first single, 0.60 kr.; second single, 0.30 kr.; third single, 0.20 kr.

34374. They are all slow trains?—Yes, there is no difference for convenience by fast trains in those local zones.

34375. There are no fast trains, probably?—Yes, for long distances.

34376. But in the local zones?—Perhaps not. Zone II., first class, 0.80 kr.; second class, 0.44 kr.; third class, 0.30 kr. Zone III., first class, 1 kr.; second class, 0.60 kr.; third class, 0.40 kr.

34377. Now for the long distance zone. There are no less than sixteen zones?—That is so.

34378. Give us the first, the middle, and the last zone?—Zone 1, from 21 to 27 km., by fast train, first single, 1.00 kr.; second single, 1.30 kr.; third single, 0.70 kr. By slow train, first single, 1.50 kr.; second single, 1 kr.; third single, 0.60 kr.

34379. Now the middle zone; take the eighth zone?—The eighth zone is from 115 to 130 km. By fast train, first single, 12 kr.; second single, 8 kr.; third single, 4.80 kr. By slow train, first single, 16 kr.; second single, 5.40 kr.; third single, 4 kr.

34380. Now take the last zone, over 400 km.—By fast train, first single, 30 kr.; second single, 20 kr.; third single, 12 kr. By slow train, first single, 24 kr.; second single, 16 kr.; third single, 10 kr.

34381. Now with regard to market tickets?—There are no market tickets so-called on the Continent.

34382. That answers that question then?—But I should explain that in Germany people go to market are carried at fourth-class fares of 2 pf. per kilometre, and are permitted to take with them without charge any produce they are conveying to market.

34383. Mr. Asenack.—In North Germany?—North Germany, Prussia.

34384. Chairman.—Anything they can carry with them?—Yes, they must take it in the carriages themselves, but there is no excess charge made for it.

34385. Mr. Asenack.—Are these any traders' tickets?—There are no traders' tickets.

34386. Are there no traders' tickets in any of the countries you have mentioned?—I should have mentioned that with regard to Holland I have no information on the market ticket question.

34387. Chairman.—With regard to workmen's tickets in France. Do you find that there are cheap return tickets issued to workmen?—Yes. The Ouest Railway is the first I have dealt with.

34388. Between what points? They are only issued in the vicinity of large places, I suppose?—In the vicinity of large places, yes. I give three places on the Ouest Railway, Rouen, Havre, and Brest.

34389. Did you find that there are cheap workmen's return tickets from stations in the vicinity of Paris with Paris?—Yes. I have taken the Nord line by itself.

34390. You are dealing with the Ouest now?—Yes.

34391. Rouen—what did you find there with regard to workmen's tickets?—They are given to definite points, but I have shown here only the distances to those places with the rate charged in each case. The distances run in that locality are from 6 km., and the charges, for day return tickets, third class, are from 30 centimes for 6 km. to 50 centimes for 15 km. distance.

34392. How do these rates compare with the ordinary return fare?—For the 6 km. distance, the 30 centimes workmen's ticket compares with 45 centimes for the ordinary return ticket.

34393. And for the last distance?—For the 15 km. distance, the 50 centimes workmen's ticket compares with 1fr. 80c. for the ordinary return ticket.

34394. I suppose the rates are much the same at Havre?—They are about the same, except that the maximum distance is 10 km.

34395. The workmen's fares seem to be about the same on the Ouest of France; where there are workmen's fares they are on the same basis?—Yes, but there is a slight difference. For the 10 km. in the

first district the fare is 35 centimes, whereas in the Havre district it is 50 centimes. In the third section of the Ouest district, the distances are much longer; they are from 10 to 25 km.

34396. Where is Brest?—I cannot tell you exactly, I took it out of the tariff book. They give a number of workmen's fares for it, consequently I assumed it was rather an important manufacturing place.

34397. Mr. Scates.—Probably a factory town?—Yes, and the workmen have to travel long distances, up to 25 km.

34398. Chairman.—Do the Northern of France issue return tickets into Paris for workmen?—Yes. For instance, 7 km., 40 centimes; that compares with 55 centimes charged for ordinary return tickets for a distance of 8 km. they charge 30 centimes only, in a different locality, which compares with 55 centimes for the ordinary return ticket.

34399. With regard to season tickets on the State railways of France?—That has been typed in the wrong place. If I might, I would adhere to the workmen's tickets arrangements right through. What I have mentioned so far refers to daily tickets only. On the second sheet you will find references to weekly tickets.

34400. Are weekly tickets issued to workmen on the Nord Railway?—Workmen, and other employees in Paris having an income of less than 2,000 francs per annum, are granted third class weekly tickets on the Nord Railway at the following fares. Shall I take the first and last?

34401. No; take this one through?—Up to five km., 1 fr.; from six to eleven km., 1 fr. 40 c.; from twelve to eighteen km., 2 fr. 5 c.; from nineteen to twenty-five km., 2 fr. 80 c.; from twenty-six to thirty-two km., 3 fr. 60 c.; and from thirty-three to forty km., 4 fr. 80 c.

34402. These tickets, I understand, are third class weekly tickets, issued to workmen, available by any train, and as many times as they like; is that so?—I would not say that. Workmen travel in the morning and in the evening usually.

34403. But supposing he wishes to go home to dinner at mid day, there is nothing to indicate that he may not travel by one of these tickets?—I would not go further than the statement I have made; but it is an exact translation from the special tariff, so there is no limitation, I take it.

34404. There is no limitation?—Apparently not.

34405. Is there any limitation as to the time of day at which these tickets are available?—No, there is nothing contained in this statement.

34406. Then, they are available, as I understand, by any train at any time?—I cannot go beyond what I have said; this is taken from the official document.

34407. Mr. Scates.—Once a day each way, no doubt.

34408. Chairman.—Are the rates different on the State Railway in France?—Yes. Workmen's weekly tickets are granted within a radius of thirty km. of Bordeaux, Nantes, Angers, Orleans, Tours, La Rochelle, Rochefort, and Niort, at the following prices. The distances run from one to thirty km. by single kilometres.

34409. Take the five kilometre distance?—50 centimes.

34410. For ten kilometres?—1fr. 15 centimes.

34411. For twenty kilometres?—1fr. 75 centimes.

34412. For thirty kilometres?—2fr. 30 centimes.

34413. These are weekly tickets on the State Railway?—Yes.

34414. Now with regard to Belgium?—I have the rates for workmen's tickets there also.

34415. First of all, day tickets?—For one single journey per day, subscription tickets are issued for distances up to 30 kilometres.

34416. What is the rate for a distance of five kilometres?—To be used on six days a week the charge is 50 centimes; to be used on seven days a week, 75 centimes.

34417. For ten kilometres?—To be used on six days a week, 80 centimes; seven days, 90 centimes.

34418. For twenty kilometres?—A six-day ticket, 105 centimes; a seven-day ticket, 130 centimes. These are for one single journey per day.

34419. Therefore there is a distinction in Belgium?—Yes.

Nov. 9, 1907.

Mr. Philip MacSully, Transit Inspector, Department of Agriculture

Workmen's tickets—French railways.

Belgian railways.

Nov. 9, 1907.

Mr. Philip
MacFelly,
Transport
Inspector,
Department
of Agricul-
ture.

Workmen's
tickets—con-
tinued.
Belgian
railways.

34419. There did not seem to be any such limitation in France?—No. These rates are for a single journey per day, only one way.

34419a. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—They have also a ticket for a return journey per day.

34420. Chairman.—The rates you have just given us are for a single journey per day. Will you now give the rates for a return journey per day? Take five kilometres.—These tickets extend the distance up to 100 kilometres; the single tickets only went up to twenty kilometres. For five kilometres, a six-day ticket is 35 centimes; a seven-day ticket, 115 centimes.

34421. That is the double journey?—Yes.

34422. Now go on to ten kilometres?—For ten kilometres, a six-day ticket is 125 centimes; a seven-day ticket, 145 centimes.

34423. For twenty kilometres?—A six-days ticket, 150 centimes; a seven-days ticket, 175 centimes.

34424. Now the forty kilometre rate?—A six-days ticket, 200 centimes; a seven-days ticket, 230 centimes.

34425. Now take the last?—100 kilometres, a six-days ticket, 315 centimes; a seven-days ticket, 360 centimes.

34426. There is no limitation as to time in that case, is there?—No. I have nothing about it on my notes.

34427. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—In addition to that they have tickets available for one journey to and from in the week?—Yes; I am coming to that.

34428. Mr. Dawson.—Are you sure that the workmen's tickets are not available only by certain trains in the morning?—I am not definite about that. Here are the notes which have been made out by the Committee.

34429. Do you suggest that they are available to come in at twelve o'clock and back at three?—These are all the notes I have.

34430. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—There is nothing in the tariff, I worked it out?—Those are not my own translations; I can only give you what is on my notes.

34431. Mr. Sexton.—Is the only limitation that they must produce evidence that they are workmen?—Certificates have, in some cases, to be presented.

34432. Mr. Dawson.—It is clear there must be some protection to the railway company that they are not used by every third class passenger?—Yes.

34433. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—They have to satisfy the company that they are workmen, but there is no limitation in the tariff.

34434. Mr. Dawson.—They may be limited by the fact that they are available only by workmen's trains, and that that is defined in the time table.

34435a. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—In the tariff they have simply to satisfy the company that they are workmen.

34435. Chairman.—I do not think you need give us the single journey rates, as they do not apply to anything we have got. In Denmark there are no special rates?—There are no special rates for workmen.

34436. In Austria?—In Austria workmen are carried single journeys on the following scale. There are ten zones.

34437. They have the zone fares?—Yes.

34438. Take the first?—From 1 to 10 km., for single journeys, 12 heller.

34439. From 11 to 50 km. 1-63 heller.

34440. From 51 to 100 km. 1-Yes. These are for single journeys only. From 91 to 100 km., 125 heller.

34441. They seem to have a very simple arrangement in Hungary?—Yes. When labourers present a certificate as to their occupation they are charged half third-class fare.

34442. That is very simple?—Yes.

34443. Mr. Dawson.—Do you understand that to apply to all travellers—that if I get a certificate that I am a labourer I may always travel half price?—So long as the certificate lasts. If a man is employed by a farmer he can only present the certificate that he is engaged for a certain time.

34444. Do you understand that to mean that, take an ordinary workman; he has a job; can he, as

long as he has a certificate that he is on that job, travel half-price, even though the journey has nothing to do with the job, or with going backwards and forwards from and to the job?—No; the certificate will certify the time the man is engaged upon the job.

34445. The travelling must have connection with the job?—Yes.

34446. Is it not a general power to the workmen to demand half-price?—No.

34447. Mr. Apisall.—What are the arrangements they make as to the return of the certificate?—That I cannot say.

34448. Chairman.—Now, with regard to Germany?—In Germany workmen are carried for distances up to a maximum of 50 km. at half fourth-class fare, that is, 1 pf. per kilometre, with a minimum charge of 10 pf. for single journey.

34449. That is simple also. Are there any weekly return tickets issued?—Weekly return tickets are issued to workmen at the total of the ordinary workmen's fares. No reduction apparently is made.

34450. In regard to Holland, you have no information?—No.

34451. Sir H. Jekyll.—Are there any special fares for school-children?—Yes, but I have not dealt with them. I dealt with the matter almost entirely from the agricultural and industrial point of view.

34452. Mr. Sexton.—Do they exist?—Yes.

34453. In what countries?—I could not say.

34454. Generally?—Yes, students' tickets.

34455. Mr. Dawson.—In Germany are they not one of the classes of tickets which have been abolished by the new reform?—No; the revised scale given to me is exactly the same as the other, but with reduced figures.

34456. They have abolished a good many special classes of tickets; do you think they have retained this one? Children's tickets?

34457. Yes?—I am not prepared to go into that; I did not deal with that question, but in going through the Tariff Books I noticed usually that children were carried at reduced rates in some of the countries; France is one, I could not tell you the whole of them. I did not deal with the matter from an educational point of view.

34458. In the revision is there a reduction of the children's fares?—I could not tell you.

34459. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—In Belgium they have very cheap fares for students?—Workmen's, traders', and market tickets and ordinary fares are what I looked into specially. There are a number of reductions in France. If two or three members of a family are travelling together they get a reduction at any time.

34460. Mr. Sexton.—Is that in France only?—I am not sure about that.

34461. Chairman.—Now, with regard to goods traffic? I ought to explain why this has been gone into in such detail. The reason is that owing to the public interest taken in the matter the Department considered it well to place the translations that they have made open to the public. That was some months ago, and the opportunity was availed of to some extent. But this occasioned our going into the matter fully as far as our evidence is concerned, but anybody might have taken notes of points which we consider unimportant; if I had omitted details from my evidence it might have left the Department open to the charge of not having gone fully into the matter.

34462. But we have all this really ourselves. First of all, with regard to the system in Belgium for express goods. What are the rates charged there?—The rates according to Tariff No. 1.—

34463. That is the highest class?—Yes, that is the highest class—express goods.

34464. Express goods are charged on the highest class?—Yes, and the tariff comprises all the necessary expenses except collection and delivery of the goods, disbursements, reimbursements, advice of arrival, and payment on declaration of interest in delivery. The rates for these goods when prepaid and weighing up to 50 kg., for all distances—they are scaled according to weight; shall I go through the scale?

34465. Give us an example?—Packages not exceeding 5 kg. in weight, 80 centimes; over 50 and up to 30 kg., 2 fr.; and the last is over 50 and up to 50 kg., 3 fr. 50 c. Of course, there are intermediate weights

Denish
railways.

Austrian and
Hungarian
railways.

34456 This is for all express goods traffic, I understand?—Perpaid. The public can prepay these packages by stamps, and if adhesive stamps are attached these are the charges. When the packages are not stamped the scale is the same as for the prepaid stamped parcels with an excess fee of 20 centimes for each package.

34457 An excess fee of 25 per parcel?—Yes.

34457a. *Chairman*.—I should like to get at something about agricultural produce if I could.

34458 Mr. *Desmet*.—Might I clear up a point here? You say that these rates do not include collection and delivery?—That is so.

34459. "Express" seems to imply that the consignor wants it at once. Can you tell us what arrangements are, in fact, made?—Does it get to the station, is an advice note then sent, and does the user fetch it next day?—I can give you that under the heading "Collection and Delivery." I have a chapter dealing with that in all countries, and Belgium will come in its order.

34459a. *Chairman*.—About these express goods parcels; what is the maximum weight that can be carried under that arrangement?—60 kg. The railways are not bound to accept for transit, by express, packages of more than one cubic meter volume, or weighing more than 150 kg.

34471 I mean packages that are stamped?—60 kg

34472 Anything above 60 kg must be paid for in the ordinary way, not with stamps?—Not by stamps.

34473 Is the scale of rates different for unstamped express traffic?—That excess fee of 20 centimes per package is added for packages up to 60 kg. Two-pence per package is added if they are not prepaid.

34474 If they are not prepaid by stamps, you mean?—Yes; an excess fee of 25 per package is charged.

34475. These are many conditions attached to this express business. I suppose the railway companies are not bound to accept anything above a certain weight?—They are not bound to accept for transit, by express, packages of more than 150 kg. or beyond certain dimensions: one cubic metre volume.

34475. They may refuse to accept them, not only if they are unwieldy, but if they are unwieldy or bulky?—Yes.

34477 In other words, they are sent by passenger trains, I suppose?—By ordinary trains.

34478 In those big wagons that one sees so frequently on the Continent?—Yes.

34479 Mr. *Desmet*.—Do you suggest that in Belgium I cannot send my tons at express rate?—Not by express train. 150 kg. is the maximum weight accepted for transit by express train.

34480 I did not know that any country did that?—Yes. That express train, of course, is not a fast goods train. It is an express passenger train. You have three services in Belgium: express goods, accelerated goods, and slow goods; express being the highest rate, accelerated goods an intermediate rate, corresponding to the fast goods in France, and then the slow goods.

34480a. Mr. *Desmet*.—Surely in Belgium they use the phrase *grande vitesse*.

34481. *Chairman*.—And *petite vitesse*?—They have three; they have an accelerated goods rate, which is intermediate between *grande vitesse* and *petite vitesse*.

34482 Mr. *Desmet*.—The point I want to get at is, is it (1) or (2) that corresponds with the phrase that is used all over the Continent—*grande vitesse*?—What I call "express" would correspond to it.

34483 Which is the one that is double the normal tariff?—They do not go on that principle in Belgium; they have a special rate. But they have three grades; there is the fastest, the express; accelerated goods, an intermediate service; and slow goods, ordinary goods train.

34484 Mr. *Desmet*.—Have they any special rate for export?—That I will deal with later on; they have, for special commodities, and for import.

34485 *Chairman*.—I think we have had enough about these express parcels. In Belgium all consignments of slow goods, in addition to the tariff rates, are charged a fee of twenty centimes, are they not?—Yes, for registration.

34486 Is there also a charge, when the goods arrive at their destination, for posting the advice note?—Yes.

34487. These are several little charges of that kind in Belgium?—Yes, per consignment.

34488 Is it not the fact also that in Belgium, when there is a consignment containing different classes of goods, say, a mixed package, the rate charged by the company is the highest rate they can charge for the highest class of goods in the package?—Yes, that is so.

34489 We have had that before us. The system in Belgium on the State railways is that in regard to a mixed package where there are different classes of goods, they charge the highest?—Yes. But there is this provision made. If it be advantageous to the public, and if the way-bill shows separately the weight of each category of goods, consignments composed of different classes, or belonging to special tariffs, with a proviso of a minimum of 10,000 kg. may be charged separately at the price of the class or special tariff applicable to each category of goods.

34490 Mr. *Desmet*.—Provided there is not less than one ton of each?—Yes.

34491. *Chairman*.—What is the minimum charge under slow goods tariff?—For Class I?

34492 Yes?—The charges are shown separately for each weight in the tariff. The Tariff Book has a scale which shows the minimum for each one of the classes of rates. The actual amount of each will be shown on my chapter dealing with the calculation of freight charges.

34493 There are so many conditions in the Belgian tariffs that it is almost impossible to get at what one should have to pay. It is impossible to make comparisons, there are so many subsidiary charges. For instance, for goods of bulk they may charge 50 per cent extra, and so on. In fact, they seem to do as they like?—It is all down in black and white. The rights and obligations of both railways and public are clearly shown in black and white in every country on the Continent.

34494 Mr. *Scriven*.—I feel more and more every moment the impossibility of dealing with Mr. MacNulty's evidence unless his memoranda are first applied to each member of the Commission. Unless each member of the Commission has an ample opportunity of going through these memoranda they cannot be possibly used to ascertain those principles which no doubt are deducible from this vast mass of detail. How does that strike you, Mr. MacNulty?—I think so too.

34495 Mr. *Desmet*.—I suppose the Department are contemplating printing this. They are surely not going to waste all this—simply put it away?—This information has all been got out at the request of the Commission. The Department were asked by the Commission if they would supply some information as to foreign rates, and they undertook to do so. It has turned out a much bigger thing than they anticipated when they gave the promise, and has involved considerably more expense than they anticipated.

34496 Mr. *Scriven*.—I suppose it would go into a pamphlet of about a couple of hundred pages?—Yes.

34496a. Mr. *Desmet*.—I wonder if they would print it if the Commission asked them.

34497. The Secretary.—The matter we have here is nothing compared with what Mr. MacNulty is going to furnish. I understand that what he is going to submit in January will fill a small cart—(P.H. 1000.)

—The comparisons of actual working rates will be bulky, but the information required by the Commission will probably be contained in a small bundle of sheets of foolscap. The working out of it showing the rates so that the railway companies can check them, will need a lot of paper, because we will have to show every rate that we use. This roll (consisting of off of papers) contains one set—artificial measures; there are probably 1,200 actual Irish rates in it. Then, in columns after each Irish rate is shown the foreign rate taken for comparison, with all the conditions attaching to it, so as to enable the railway companies or the Commissioners to see whether it is a legitimate comparison or not. We do not say whether it is or not; we get the closest comparison we can, and it is for anyone to say whether it is a legitimate comparison or not.

34498 Mr. *Scriven*.—You have explained that the Department anticipated that unless they gave very fully the results of their inquiries, some people might think a partial statement had been made. If the

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Mr Philip MacNulty, Transport Inspector, Department of Agriculture

Belgian system of charging mixed packages

Minimum charge per consignment under slow goods tariff

The extent of the evidence to be submitted by the witness.

Comparisons of rates to be prepared.

Nov 9, 1902.

Mr. Philip
MacNulty,
Treasurer,
Department of Agricul-
ture.

only thing that appears in the evidence as a comparatively short statement by word of mouth, when everybody knows that you had prepared a great mass of matter, the doubt will become greater, will it not?—I feel that I am placed rather at a disadvantage in being asked general questions, because the mass of detail is immense, and it is impossible for me, even though I have read and re-read my statement of evidence, to answer accurately, or as accurately as I would wish. I may make a general statement which may not be strictly accurate, and which might be open to criticism hereafter.

34500. You may be constrained, by reason of the question put to you, to give an inadequate, or even an incorrect impression of the effect of the general material.—Exactly. For instance, I find that in going through the matter relating to France, there were two very important matters omitted with regard to rates. I intended to go back upon them, with the Chairman's permission, by-and-by.

34501. But if every member of the Commission has the whole of the matter put into his hands and addresses to Mr. MacNulty questions from his own point of view, it can hardly then be said that the examination is incomplete.

34502. Mr. Ascroft.—I am not so sanguine as to that. I think that I could talk to Mr. MacNulty for a week myself, and if every member of the Commission did the same, we should all get tired of each other's cross-examination anyway.—I hope also that you will have a little pity on me. For months I have been getting in about fourteen hours a day on this work.

34503. Mr. Ascroft.—I think you have done perfect marvels. I have studied a good many of the continental books, but I have never seen any that attempted to cover the ground you have. It is a perfectly colossal work.

34504. Mr. Sturges.—This is not the only detailed question that has forced the subject of inquiry by the Commission from time to time. Under all these details there are certain leading facts and principles. If the details are made the subject of adequate examination, no doubt conclusions may be arrived at. It is obvious that unless we segment ourselves with Mr. MacNulty's details we cannot put to him the questions necessary to define what is essential.

The Secretary.—I will undertake to have this printed and circulated before the next sittings of the Commission, and the examination of Mr. MacNulty can be resumed then.

34505. Mr. Ascroft.—What about the tables? The Secretary.—That would be hopeless; but Mr. MacNulty says that he will have all these tables reduced to a summarized form, sufficiently elaborate, I should think, to meet the requirements of the Commission.

If I were.—That I would undertake to do—to prepare a summary of comparisons. That is, comparisons of results obtained from the figures taken out for the use of the Commission. Of course, the details could not possibly be made out. We will supply a full copy of the whole comparison for the use of the Commission, and they may, if they wish, hand it over to the railway companies to analyse and check.

34506. Mr. Ascroft.—What you propose would be to say something of this sort of thing: "We have taken twenty measure rates in Ireland for a distance of between ten and twelve miles, and they work out at so much per ton per mile; twenty in France work out at so much, twenty in Belgium work out at so much." That is the kind of comparison you would make?—Yes, taking quantities and rates against quantities and rates; five tons against five tons and so on.

34507. For varying distances?—Yes. Our distances for measure rates run from eight miles to 250 miles for Ireland.

34508. Would you contrast the countries for distances?—For specific distances, where we had actual working rates for comparison.

34509. And for specific consignments?—Yes, giving reference to the foreign tariff, so that it may be turned up and checked.

34510. Mr. Sturges.—I think the print of your in-

vestigations will have a value far beyond the present inquiry.—There are two points with reference to France to which I wish to call attention, with regard to the treatment of stations intermediate between two points, where specially low rates have been struck. Goods sent under the terms of an ordinary special tariff, whether through or not, to or from a station not named in the special tariff, but an intermediate one, enjoy the benefits of the said tariffs on paying for the entire distance comprised between the named stations, the first one and the last one, the rate which applies to that section, if it is based on calculation that it is more advantageous to the consignor than that of the general or special tariffs of the company from his own station.

34511. Mr. Ascroft.—In other words, Droghda sending to Belfast could make use, if it chose, of any special rate between Dublin and Belfast?—Exactly.

34512. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—And they add the local rate on?—No.

34513. Mr. Ascroft.—Supposing there is a special rate of ten shillings between Dublin and Belfast, and the class rate from Droghda to Belfast would be fourteen shillings, the Droghda merchant would be entitled to send his goods at the ten shilling rate?—Yes.

34514. Mr. Sturges.—Would that meet the dissatisfaction in the vicinity of competitive points in Ireland where they are charged rates far higher than the competitive points?

34515. Mr. Ascroft.—It would be a great concession. May we put on the notes, as you will, no doubt, remember, that that does not apply to transit traffic. Supposing there is a through rate from Biele to Augsburg, a French consignment cannot claim the benefit of the rate?—I think I have that on my notes.

34516. That is an exception to the otherwise universal rule?—Yes. Goods forwarded under the terms of special export tariffs, through or not, by a French station not named, but intermediate between two stations named, may profit by the rates of those tariffs by paying for the distance between the named point which precedes the forwarding station and the frontier port or point whence export is effected, if the rate thus calculated is more advantageous than that of the general or special tariffs of each company. That is giving them the advantage of the export rate that is not the transit rate.

34517. That would not be available for local consumption at Havre. Provided you were going to ship it at Havre, you could send it, but you could not use it for local consumption?—No.

34518. Chairman.—We were on Belgium just now, and were dealing with express goods and slow goods?—We had got the slow goods, I think.

34519. With regard to Belgium, there are a large number of special rates?—Yes.

34520. In addition to the ordinary rates?—Yes, for export, import, and interior traffic.

34521. If you could give us any information about that I think it would be valuable.—In this chapter of my evidence the only information I could give you is as to the commodities and tonnages. The rates I have noted will be dealt with if any of them are used in the comparison by us, if they come in for comparison at all.

34522. Of course the most important thing for us is the comparison.—Yes. That, of course, will come in in that (pointing to roll of papers) the compilation of actual rates.

34523. You have not got it before you?—No.

34524. Let us get on the notes, if we can, the special rates to which your attention has been drawn in Belgium. You say, first of all, that there is not only export and import, but also interior traffic?—Yes.

34525. What are the conditions of that? You have not the rates?—No, not here.

34526. Take export traffic first. Will they make a special rate when there is a ten or fifteen lot?—The tonnages vary according to the commodities. Coal, coke, stone, and earth, ten-ton and fifty-ton lots; clay, lime, and gravel, ten-ton lots; alcohol, matches, butter, cheese, combed flax, eggs, fine pottery, five ton and ten-ton lots; wheat, rolled and raw whole beans, turnip seed, ten-ton lots. (I am making a selection from the list.) Metallurgical products, screws, nails, ten-ton lots; glassware, seven-ton lots.

34527. These are exports?—Yes.

34524. For lots of the tannages you have mentioned the State Railway will put in special rates?—Yes.

34525. Which you will give us subsequently?—If used in comparison with Irish rates. If we have any corresponding conditions in Ireland we will make use of those rates in comparison; if not, we will not bring them in at all.

34526. You have butter and seed and flax and all that sort of thing?—Yes; they will be used as far as those commodities are concerned where the conditions are the same.

34527. Will the railway make some arrangement with regard to export traffic?—Yes. China clay, lead, codlin, rock and sea-salt, alcohol, butter, sugar, bacon, starch, hides, salt herrings, sulphate of copper, plank—

34528. It seems to me that it is not necessary to go all through that list; it appears that any traffic in five or ten-ton lots can get a special rate?—Not any traffic, it is limited. The list is not a very long one, and that completes the import traffic.

34529. Mr. Aswerth. I noticed that the list of exports that you gave has only two items in common with the list of imports. It may be an accident; there may be others you have not given?—I think I have got a fairly comprehensive list.

34530. Tell me if I am correct, that the only two articles that get a special import rate, and also have a special export rate, are alcohol and butter?—I have not examined that; I think leaf tobacco comes into both.

34531. You did not read that out?—No; I was only selecting them. Soap and leaf tobacco both come in the two lists.

34532. Chairman.—Now, in regard to interior traffic?—Special rates are given, and the tonnages vary from five to twenty tons, according to the commodity; mineral pyrites, fifty-ton lots; limestone, fifty tons, steel, any weight.

34533. That is curious?—Yes; there is no limitation of weight as regards steel. Coal for zinc and lead furnaces, 50 to 150 tons, manures and certain agricultural products, in lots of 250 lb. and upwards. That is a rate which is lower than the wagon load rate; it is for small consignments of those things. Coal, on certain connections, on certain lines, ten to fifty-ton lots, products for lead improvement, cattle dung, and materials for road-making, in ten-ton lots; sweepings and city sweepings, in ten to fifty-ton lots; and there is one special rate for 100-ton lots; bar-iron, fifty-ton lots; sand, fifty-ton lots, coal for use in brickworks, ten-ton lots, rough castings, fifty-ton lots; cereals, five-ton lots, large goods in five-ton lots.

34534. That covers nearly everything. Cereals would cover all the grain; it is a very wide term?—Yes.

34535. It appears to me that for anything they can carry in wagon loads there are special rates fixed?—I think there are forty-seven or forty-eight of these special rates.

34536. Mr. Aswerth.—What do you say to the Chairman's suggestion? Do you think there are special times for wagon loads of everything?—That this covers everything in wagon loads—probably it does so in per cent of what would go in wagon loads.

34537. Chairman.—What is "conveyance by subscription"?—As I understand it—the conditions are given in full—that the consignee secures the use of the wagon periodically, or so many wagons per week.

34538. That is a practice which has been in operation for years, to my knowledge?—Yes. I think that that is the principle of it.

34539. A man can engage a wagon or two wagons or ten wagons, and fill them with anything he likes, and he pays so much for the wagons?—Yes, but that arrangement goes further, he must take a certain number per week or per day.

34540. Certainly?—Yes.

34541. That is a very odd arrangement?—Yes. It is given for Belgium and one other country.

34542. It is given for Holland, too?—Yes.

34543. I have done it myself in Holland and Belgium many years ago. It is really what they call the *compulsive* undertaking to fill the wagons and "crushing so many"?—Yes.

34544. That does not affect this country. With regard to the disinfection of goods wagons there are parallel cases to that in Ireland, I suppose?—To the disinfection of goods wagons?

34545. Yes!—There is no regulation that I am aware of in regard to that.

Mr. Tatham.—Disinfection for live stock is compulsory.

Witness.—But not goods wagons. This is the disinfection of wagons for the conveyance of certain kinds of goods, such as manure, or the conveyance of live poultry; they treat live poultry as animals on the Continent, we treat them as goods traffic in Ireland.

34546. Chairman.—At any rate, in Belgium, if poultry is carried in a wagon, the company or the State consider that the wagon ought to be cleaned, and the consignee has to pay for it?—Yes, in practice, I think, whether the poultry be conveyed in cages, baskets, or loose.

34547. What are "disbursements"?—Really "paid out," money paid out. The railway companies charge a commission on these monies paid out. I brought that in because there is no such practice in Ireland; it is a distinction.

34548. What is the commission?—20 centimes on 20 francs and on more than 20 francs per consignment and per indivisible fraction of 200 fr. it is 25 centimes.

34549. They also make a charge for collecting cash?—Yes, but that is not for collecting their own freight. It is cash on delivery system. The consignee may charge an amount on his goods, and the railway charges a percentage commission for collecting it for him.

34550. Mr. Aswerth.—They act as agents for the consignors?—Yes.

34551. Mr. Aswerth.—Will all these little extras, these twopennies, and so on, get into your table of comparisons of rates?—Yes, they will come in. But they make very little difference when you come to deal with wagon-load traffic.

34552. But in some cases they would?—Undoubtedly. Where they come in every one will be reckoned. I will show the rate and the necessary fees put on; 2d. for registration on a ten-ton wagon is not much.

34553. Chairman.—You refer in considerable detail to all the various little charges and arrangements that are made with regard to Belgian traffic. I see you have a list here of unit rates on Belgian railways for goods traffic?—Yes. These are the unit rates on which the normal rates are calculated.

34554. We have not dealt with special rates?—No.

34555. I think that had better go on the notes as it is?—Very well.

34556. These are the normal rates?—Yes.

34557. Chairman.—That practically finishes with Belgium.

34558. Mr. Aswerth.—Might I ask that when this gets to you for revision—I do not want it done at this moment—you should have the foreign term put in in brackets, otherwise it is a little difficult. If you are looking it up in the original to know what the phrase is that you are translating. They are technical terms, and it would be a convenience if we could have what their ordinary expression is for slow goods, accelerated goods, and so on?—Yes, I understand. My difficulty was rather to get away from that and to use uniform terms intelligible to everybody.

34559. I am not in the least complaining, but if one wants to refer to the original one wants to know what the original technical phrase was?—Yes. Do you wish it done throughout?

34560. Not every time; if you give it once one does not want it every time?—The phrases are not used in the same sense in the different countries. In Belgium you have express goods, accelerated goods, and ordinary goods; those are the literal translations. The first and second terms are reversed in application in Germany. If you took them in the same order in Germany you would compare No. 1 with No. 2.

34561. That is the difficulty of translations?—Yes, I will have done what you ask.

Nov. 9, 1907.
Mr. Philip MacNally,
Inspector,
Department of Agriculture.

Belgian railways.—

The cost of disinfection of wagons charged to consignees in certain cases.

Commission charged by the railway companies on "disbursements."

Commission charged for collecting such an delivery on behalf of consignees.

Unit rates for goods traffic.

UNIT RATES ON BELOJAN RAILWAYS, FOR GOODS TRAFFIC.

STATE RAILWAYS.

	Express.		Accelerated	Slow.			
	For 10 kg.		For 100 kg.	For 1,000 kg. per kilometre			
	per kilometre.						
				Class 1.	Class 2.	Class 3.	Class 4.
Centimes.							
From 1—25 Kilometres.	3	3	18	8	6	6	
" 25—75 "	3	3	18	8	6	6	
" 75—100 "	3	1-5	8	4	3	3	
" 101—125 "	3	1-5	8	4	3	3	
" 126—150 "	3	1-5	8	4	3	3	
" 151—200 "	1-5	1-5	5	2	1	1	
" 201—300 "	1-5	1-5	5	2	1	1	
Over 300 Kilometres.	1-5	1-5	4	2	1	1	
Constant—Station charges	15	50	110	110	100	{ 6—100 km. 10 Over 100 „ 200	

Nov. 1, 1907.

Mr. Philip MacNelly, Transport Inspector, Department of Agriculture.

Belgian railways.—Unit rates for goods traffic.

Similarity to the Belgian scale of rates on express goods.

Charges on goods by express, fast goods and ordinary goods with service.

Mixed consignments by slow goods trains.

Goods charged while in the wagon load class.

34561. *Chairman.*—Now about Germany. What is the unit of weight in Germany?—The unit of weight is calculated on 10 kg. with a minimum charge for 20 kg.

34562. Have they any arrangement with regard to the 10 and 20 kilos?—For rounding off of fractions for the purposes of calculation.

34563. Now about the money?—It is rounded off to an even 10 pf., sums under 5 pf. being omitted, and those of 5 pf. and upwards counted as 10 pf.

34564. Now, your remarks with reference to express goods in Belgium, with which we have been dealing more or less, apply to Germany, do they not?—Yes, sir.

34565. Where they have what we call in this country a small parcels scale for goods sent by express service. They have a scale, and the rates seem to be generally the same as they are in Belgium?—Yes; the charge for express goods is double that for what we may call fast goods trains.

34566. Mr. Acworth.—Four times the ordinary goods, is not it?—Four times the ordinary.

34567. *Chairman.*—What is the preliminary charge for consignment of fast goods in Germany?—60 pf.

34568. Then there is a special tariff for the fast goods?—For certain fast goods there is a special tariff.

34569. And a similar arrangement with regard to mixed consignments?—Yes.

34570. That is Germany?—Yes, Germany, and when the weights are separate the charge may be worked out separately—if it is to the advantage of the consignee.

34571. With regard to the slow goods rates?—Any less than a wagon load and not loaded in as a wagon load are charged at the rate for those goods, with a minimum charge of 30 pf.

34572. There is also a small charge there again, is there?—That is in case of a fresh calculation of freight on way, in case the goods are not taken through. The minimum charge is 10 pf.

34573. The same arrangement there again applies with regard to mixed consignments by the slow goods trains?—Yes.

34574. What have you got to say about wagon goods by slow transport?—All goods which are handed over as wagon loads with one waybill for each wagon are charged as the wagon load class.

34575. Whether they fill the wagon or not?—Yes; if they are handed over as wagon load goods the charge is as for a wagon.

34576. What is the train wagon load in Germany?—There are four main classes and three subsidiary classes. For the main class the minimum weight

charged is 10,000 kg., 10 tons, and for the sub-classes the minimum weight is 5 tons, or 5,000 kg.

34577. Now, there again, the same as in Belgium, if the consignee engages a wagon he may put in what he likes?—Yes.

34578. The wagon is charged?—Yes. Provided there is nothing contrary in the regulations under which the goods are sent.

34579. You must not put gunpowder, but ordinary merchandise?—

34580. Mr. Acworth.—But if the wagon only holds eight tons he has to pay for ten?—Oh, if they do not provide a 10 ton wagon they cannot charge him for it. I think there is a special regulation as to that in the loading chapter of my statement. Last there might be some misapprehension with regard to the answer I gave to the last question, I think it well to mention that although the load may be composed of goods of different kinds or belonging to different main classes, it is stated in the regulations that when a wagon load is composed of goods under different tariffs, to which a different rate per ton is applied, the freight charged on the whole consignment is as the highest tariff applicable. That is an important point.

34581. *Chairman.*—Now, what is the arrangement with regard to empty packages, because we have had a good deal of evidence about the carriage of empties in Ireland?—Those coming under the general class for slow goods, in less than wagon loads, are charged for half the weight, with a minimum of 20 kg. provided no cheaper rate is fixed for packages used for certain goods carried under special tariffs.

34582. What are included in those special arrangements?—Barrels, tins, kegs, sweet and jam jars, etc.

34583. All empties?—Well, practically all empties including fowl-coops.

34584. Mr. Acworth.—They are charged half the tariff rate for what went in?—No; half their actual weight.

34585. It comes to the same thing. They are charged on half the weight they actually weigh?—Yes.

34586. A sugar-bared pays only half what it did weigh?—No; there is a special tariff for empties. They are not charged half the rate of the goods they contained. They are charged half their weight. It is a special tariff under which they come.

34587. A special empty tariff?—Empties come under a certain tariff.

34588. Special III, I suppose?—Probably three. I cannot give it to you right off. They come under a tariff applicable to the general small goods class.

and they are charged half weight, that is when handed in in less than wagon loads. Now I come to deal with the wagon load.

34588. And then they are charged what you might call half weight in the highest class of the classification?—Practically.

34589. Chairman.—Then they are charged double in Germany to what they are in England or Ireland?—Well, I do not know. I will be able to give you later the actual figures for comparison.

34590. Mr. Ascroft.—They are charged half the rates of the highest class of classification?—Which is slow goods. When handed in in small quantities, less than wagon loads, they are charged half of the slow goods wagon rates.

34592. Mr. Scotson.—That is, when they are empty?—When they are empty returned.

34593. Chairman.—Well, with regard to articles of unusual length, and that sort of thing, we need not refer to them?—There are minimum charges given in some cases, and certain percentages added in others.

34594. Fresh meat, what have you got to say upon that?—Fresh slaughtered animals or fresh meat, except game and dead birds, are forwarded without packing in accordance with the regulations governing wagon load goods, freight being charged for at least 2,000 kg. per wagon used, and per consignment. When handed in as fast goods they are sent at the fast goods rates, and when handed in as slow goods, at the ordinary parcel goods rate. If there be a lower rate under the ordinary wagon tariff than the latter is charged.

34595. Now, fish. That is a considerable traffic in Ireland. What have you got to say about fish?—They are conveyed as express goods at fast goods rates, with a minimum charge of 60 pf. per consignment.

34596. Mr. Ascroft.—In other words they are conveyed by the fastest service at a price that is double the price of the highest class of goods service?—That is it.

34597. Chairman.—That seems to be considerably more than the condition in this country?—The actual figures would have to be compared to show that.

34598. Mr. Ascroft.—That is a classification?—That is a classification.

34599. Chairman.—Now, milk. What have you to say upon that, for that is largely an article of traffic in Ireland?—Well, we have the conditions with regard to the conveyance of milk, that is, for regular transport to a centre. They run into about twelve or fourteen pages. Shall I go through them?

34600. No; just the first of all?—Well, the first condition in Germany is that any person sending milk may pay the charges monthly.

34601. That is the best condition?—That is the first condition.

34602. Mr. Ascroft.—That monthly account is an unusual concession on the part of the railways. It is comparatively rare compared with this country?—Yes; judging from the third paragraph, I should say it is of the conditions of transport. A person getting this account must deposit security for the estimated amount of one month's freight.

34603. Chairman.—It appears that he can have a monthly credit if he is in a position to give security?—Yes.

34604. Mr. Ascroft.—I should like to ask you whether, in investigating these other matters, you have come across the question of goods being properly addressed and labelled to the consignee?—One of the largest chapters I have got in my statement of evidence deals with the packing and labelling of goods.

34605. Mr. Scotson.—All this, I submit, is giving a distorted view of the evidence. Attention is being turned from the question of rates to matters of minor importance. The effect of Mr. MacNulty's inquiries is obscured by attention being directed to points almost inappreciable amounts.

34606. Chairman.—They are all here in his proof

34607. Mr. Scotson.—But the main question is the question of rates.

34608. Chairman.—I am glancing through to see if there is anything worthy of putting on the notes with regard to the milk arrangements, and I think Mr. MacNulty will agree with me that there is very little here that is germane to our inquiry?—My statement contains particulars relative to loading and unloading, and with regard to the cans or vessels used, their construction and the marking of them. The German railways must attach a good deal of importance to these regulations. They have a special form of undertaking to be signed by the consignor appended to their regulations for public information.

34609. I have got something which is perhaps important. First of all, you have got Paragraph 7, a correct declaration of weight?—Yes; that is in the milk regulations.

34610. Yes, it is Paragraph 7?—If the weight of the milk delivered, or the weight of the vessel, whether empty or full of skinned milk, buttermilk, or whey, or the weight of boxes whether full or empty (vessels that will be containing milk in jars) is underweight on the way bill, then action will be taken in accordance with the general traffic regulations. The administration also reserves to itself the right of annulling the transit contract.

34611. That is the monthly credit?—Yes.

34612. Now, take the next paragraph, loading and unloading. How does that differ from our system in Ireland?—I do not know exactly how the different companies deal with such traffic in Ireland, but as regards Germany it is laid down here in black and white that loading and unloading is a matter for the consignor and consignee. Assistance may be afforded by the railway provided these be at the station a suitable staff for the purpose, but that is not an undertaking of the company to load or unload.

34613. They are not liable?—They are not liable for any damage which may occur in the loading or unloading.

34614. The whole work is to be done by the consignor or consignee?—Yes.

34615. Mr. Ascroft.—That does not apply to all classes?—Only to milk carried under monthly arrangement.

34616. Mr. Scotson.—Later on Mr. MacNulty has the maximum rates for live stock and the basis of rates for live stock, and I think that infinitely more important than some of these other matters?—Well, you have the basis for goods in every country that we are dealing with. You have handed it, I think, for only one country to the official reporter.

34617. Chairman.—Now, I have gone through all this table about milk, and I do not think that I need ask you any further questions upon it?—Very well, sir.

34618. Does anything come to you that you would like to say?—No; I would much rather that the course were adopted of putting my statement.

34619. That has been decided?—I don't know that there is anything I want to say about milk traffic.

34620. Now, about the unit rate on German railways for goods traffic?—Yes, you have got that there.

34621. I think we had better print that just as it is?—Very well, sir.

34622. We might take Holland as practically the same as Belgium?

34623. Mr. Ascroft.—You have only given the rates for what you call "slow" and "quick" traffic; the ordinary and the double rate. But there is also a quadruple rate for "express" traffic?—Yes.

34624. Is that limited as to weight?—It applies to wagon loads.

34625. This is Germany?—Yes. For quadruple slow goods rate goods in wagon loads are conveyed by express train.

34626. Can be sent at the quadruple rate?—At the quadruple rate.

34627. Don't you think that you might show that also in your table?—It would be as well.

Nov. 9, 1907.

Mr. Philip MacNulty,
Tomball,
Inspector,
Department of Agriculture.

German
railways;
milk traffic
regulations.

The loading
and unloading
of milk traffic
placed on
consignor and
consignee.

Unit rate
for goods
traffic.

Rates for
goods in
wagon loads
by express
train.

Nov. 9, 1903.

Mr. Philip
MacKillop,
Traffic
Inspector,
Department of Agricul-
ture.

German
railways—
Unit rates for
goods traffic.

34623. It really wants a note that steel, etc., can be sent at quadruple rates?—Yes; I shall have it inserted in the table.

UNIT RATES ON GERMAN RAILWAYS, FOR GOODS TRAFFIC.

		Express Goods.	Fast (or Quick) Goods.	Slow Goods.	Special Tariff for certain special Goods.	General Wagon-load Classes.		Special Tariffs.				Exceptional Tariffs.	
						A1	B.	A1.	A.	B.	C.	1. (Timber)	2. (Raw Materials)
						P F R N S I G.							
Principal and Subsidiary States Railways.	Conveyance Rates 100 km. and 1 km.	Quadruple the Rate for Slow Small Goods.	Double the Rate for Slow Small Goods.			150	200	250	300	350	400	450	500
	Station Through- Charge for 100 km.	Wagon- load Goods respec- tively.	Wagon- load Goods respec- tively.	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	As for Slow Small Goods	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20
	Station Through- Charge for 100 km.	Wagon- load Goods respec- tively.	Wagon- load Goods respec- tively.	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	As for Slow Small Goods	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20	Up to 10 km. 10 From 10 to 20 km. 15 Over 20 km. 20

* Conveyance Rate up to 10 Kilometers, 1/4 Pfennig per 100 km. and km.

Unit Rates of .. 50-100 Kilometers, 1/4 Pfennig

" " " 101-200 " " 0 5

" " " 201-300 " " 0 5

" " " 301-400 " " 0 5

" " " 401-500 " " 0 7

" " " over 500 " " 0 8

per 100 km. and km.

Dutch
railways—
Rates practi-
cally the same
as the Bel-
gian.

34623. Chairman.—Do you think that we may take Holland as practically the same as Belgium?—Yes; there are arrangements there for express goods, for fast goods, slow goods, and wagon load traffic.

34624. All the same as Belgium?—Yes, but I would not go so far as to say right off, in one phrase, that they are the same as Belgium.

34625. But I happen to know the arrangements of the two countries, and of course there are little variations, but practically they are the same?—Well, my knowledge of the matter is confined to what is contained in these documents, and, as I have said already, I cannot keep every detail in my mind, and I would not like to bind myself to "the same."

34626. Have you any notes with reference to the export and import rates of Germany?—Do you mean as regards the amount of them?

34627. Not about the rates, but the system. We have been told, you know, that Germany has very low export rates, so as to give encouragement to the products of Germany being sent to other countries?—Well, I will give you their list. I have a note of it here. It is on the last page but one of the German section, commencing with the paragraph "Exceptional tariffs for specified commodities."

34628. Exceptional tariffs; does that give the export rates?—Yes. Those that I refer to here are for interior transit in the country as well as the rates for export. I will read my notes:—"Exceptional tariffs for specified commodities conveyed for use within the country and for export to foreign countries." There are a number of these rates in operation, to each of which are attached special conditions. The commodities to which the tariffs apply include amongst others the following for interior transport: Beer in barrel, chestnuts and fresh nuts, milk when conveyed by contract, articles sent from Art and Industrial Museums to the provinces for the purpose of exhibition, wood coarsely worked, raw materials, such as coal, coke, charcoal, compressed peat fuel, manure, lime, phosphates of all kinds, earth, sand, gravel, chips, clay, peat-mould, ore, potatoes, roots of all kinds (probably for cattle feeding), transformed slag, clay, peat-litter, potash, lime and marl for manurial purposes; also iron and steel for building, raw sugar going to refineries, and jams of various kinds. Then, as regards export rates, they are in force for beet sugar, grain of various kinds, roots, malt, milling products, dex-

trine, starch, iron and steel, and goods made therefrom, and raw iron. These are the principal export rates contained in the tariffs.

34629. Mr. Asseforth.—The second batch is far in port only, not for home trade?—Yes, and to these rates are attached very stringent conditions. The goods are charged the ordinary interior rate in the first instance, and a rebate is made on presentation of proof that the goods have been actually shipped.

34630. These are tariffs that will apply to goods shipped at Hamburg?—They will apply to what they call the German-Belgian export rate, and the German-Netherlands export rate, on proof that the goods have been exported.

34631. Mr. Asseforth.—The second batch is for exported through German ports?—Through German ports; well, that I can settle very easily. I can clear up that point, because I have all the conditions attached to the German and Belgian and German and Netherlands Tariff Unions.

34632. Mr. Asseforth.—Are the tariffs set down as fixed lump sums?—That I cannot tell you.

34633. That would tend to settle the question?—I cannot tell you right off.

34634. Chairman.—What I understand Mr. MacKillop to say was that the ordinary rate was charged, and then on production of a document or proof that the goods were exported, a rebate is given?—That is the procedure.

34635. That is the case. Then when the goods are sent through Antwerp, who bears the reduction—the Belgian Government or the German Government, or both?—Well, there is an arrangement between the countries. There is the German-Belgian Tariff Union and there is a similar one for Germany and the Netherlands.

34636. But why should Belgium undertake to give a rebate to a German manufacturer?—Well, where these rates come in I shall be able to give you the full conditions of them.

34637. I think you will find that the low export rates from Germany apply to German ports only?—I think they would apply to export traffic passing through a frontier country.

34638. Mr. Seelen.—You say these govern the main exports, the staple exports?—These chiefly indicated in the tariffs taken by me.

34639. They comprise all the staple exports, do they?—Not from the whole of Germany. I could not go through all the rates for Germany. I selected Prussia.

34655. Are the staple and principal exports all included in the list?—Yes, they are for Prussia. For other parts of Germany, where textile industry is carried on, they are brought in there, too, but I have dealt with Prussia chiefly, as being mainly agricultural.

34657. Mr. Acworth.—These, of course, are the published tariffs for goods, railway charges only?—Railway charges only.

34658. It applies to Antwerp?—Yes.

34659. Have you been able to obtain any information with reference to the through tariffs to East African ports and to the ports of the Levant, where there is a through tariff to the port of destination made jointly between the railway and the ships?—I have got the Union tariffs, but we have no like conditions at all in Ireland.

34660. There are no through tariffs from the interior of Ireland to East Africa?—I am afraid that time is very far off.

34661. Mr. Serles.—We have enough to inquire about already.

34662. Sir Herbert Jekyll.—In the course of your inquiries have you come across secret rates given by the Prussian Government to individuals?—Well, their law states very specifically that there must not be any undue preferences given.

34663. Are you aware that there are secret rates given?—No; I cannot say whether it is so or not.

34664. You are not aware of it?—I am not aware of it.

34665. Mr. Serles.—You have no evidence of it?—No; and I think it should be known that all tariffs, even those struck temporarily, are published, and must be open to every member of the public under like conditions.

34666. Would it be a breach of the law to give a secret rate?—Well, I presume so, because the prohibition is contained in the general regulations, which have the force of law; and they apply to all Germany.

34667. Chairman.—I think we might just follow that up. With reference to the special low rates of export and to the import and internal traffic, you can give those trading little changes which you have got there, I see, summarised?—(Germany I am speaking of).—Yes.

34668. You see we have got them pretty well developed there?—Yes, the small rates of commission charged on both the moneys paid on the consignment and the amount collected.

34669. They charge the same commission as Belgium?—Yes.

34670. There are other little charges?—Accessory fees. They have accessory fees which are paid in respect of goods sent by railway, on way-bill forms one pd. each. There is a charge when they are taken in books, per book of 100. That is for interior traffic. For international traffic the charge is two pd. each form.

34661. These are what we call in this country consignee's notes?—Well they are different, rather, because the Germans, to save trouble and expense in connection with the administration of their railways, make the consignment note serve as a way-bill which goes with the goods, and also as the document upon which a receipt will be taken from the consignee.

34662. That is to say the consignee has to fill in more particulars than he has in this country?—Not necessarily. He fills in only about a fourth of the form, and the railway company use the rest of it for their purposes.

34663. At any rate the consignment note has to be paid for—a very small sum, I see?—That is when printed and supplied by the railway.

34664. And what other charges?—Customs and tax forms. That is for traffic with places outside the home Customs area. All these forms are supplied by the railway and charged for. And statistical forms.

34665. In fact they seem to charge for everything?—These statistical forms are used only for export and import traffic, and they have to be filled in. The railways act for the Government in respect of them. They supply the forms upon which the declaration

as to export or import is to be made, and charge for them, of course.

34666. And if you want a receipt from the railway company for money paid, they charge for that form, do they not?—That is really a receipt for goods handed in. The receipt for money paid is a different thing. If a consignee is sending goods, and he wants a receipt from the railway company, he has to pay for it.

34667. He has to pay for that form?—He has to pay for it.

34668. Mr. Serles.—What does he pay?—A penny.

34669. Chairman.—That, practically, exhausts Germany?—Yes.

34670. And I think we will stop now. I wish to let the representatives of the railway companies know that we have decided that the statement that Mr. MacNulty has prepared, at an enormous amount of time and trouble, will be printed, and the railway companies shall have a copy, and therefore I do not propose to take any further evidence from Mr. MacNulty till after the circulation of that document. The principal thing is the comparison of rates. (With a pause).—We are pressing forward as quickly as ever we can, and we hope to be able to give you a comparison which will really show the prevailing rates of Ireland with regard to the most material commodities affecting our prosperity.

34671. That is really what we want?—We have had the rates taken out for a considerable number of the commodities, perhaps about 50 per cent. of the rates that we require. We have the material in hand for the balance, but the analysis of it requires a considerable time.

34672. Mr. Serles.—Will it be ready for the next sitting?—I would not like to hand myself. I could not possibly say the length of time, but the Department are fully alive to the importance of the matter.

34673. The Department know quite well what is the point of the whole inquiry?—Well, they give an undertaking to the Commissioners that they would give this information, and they are anxious to present it as fully and completely as possible, so as to be satisfactory to all parties concerned.

Mr. Toller.—I understood that Mr. MacNulty's examination before the Commission will be concluded before the railway rate is opened.

34674. Chairman.—Of course we must do that. That would only be fair to the railway companies.

Mr. Toller.—And the matter that he has prepared is so very voluminous.

34675. Chairman.—I do not know until the figures are produced.

Mr. Toller.—We shall know better when we see the figures.

34676. Chairman.—I think, Mr. MacNulty, there are no two opinions about the labour and trouble that you have gone to in getting this mass of information together, and, of course, we are extremely grateful. It is impossible, in comparing specimens of this sort, to measure exactly what is really required and what is not. At any rate you have gone to extreme length in preparing for us the fullest information, and out of it we hope we shall get something that will be of great value?—As I have already explained, the reason of the full detail that I have shown is that in all the countries visited I found these regulations shown in black and white for the information of the public. In Ireland the number of written regulations available for the information of the public are comparatively few, and therefore we thought that it was only right that the Commission should have the detailed information before them, so as to know to what extent these other countries had published their regulations, and, further, the Department considered it desirable that they should get the translations of all the information they had obtained at the disposal of the public. That permission has been availed of to a certain extent, and as we do not know what notes have been made of the translations it seemed necessary that we should submit all the details to you.

Nov. 9 1907.

Mr Philip MacNulty, Town Clerk, Department of Agriculture.

Assignment as regards the submission of tables of comparison at later sittings

Explanation as to the action of the Department of Agriculture in having details of national regulations of transit right printed.

FIFTY-SEVENTH PUBLIC SITTING.—MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Office, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTT, Bart., Chairman; Sir HERBERT JAKVILL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHESON POE, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEATON; Mr. W. M. ACWORTH; and Mr. JOHN AUDLEY FREDERICK ASPINALL,

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary.)

Mr. ROBERT HENRY LIVERY, C.B., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. Robert Henry Livery, C.B., Railway Expert, ex-Gravel Manager and Engineer of the Donegal Railway.

West and South Clare railways—Investigation on behalf of the Board of Works.

34636 I think you have had an extensive connection with Irish railways?—About nineteen years.

34637 What was your last public appointment?—I inspected the West and South Clare lines for the Board of Works.

34638 I mean the last appointment you had in the Irish railways?—On the Donegal railway.

34639 What were you?—I was general manager and locomotive superintendent and engineer. I had had experience previously, altogether, about forty years' railway experience.

34640 And you remained with that railway until when?—When the Midland and Great Northern of Ireland took over the line on 1st January, 1905.

34641 You are aware that we had evidence some time ago with reference to the West and South Clare Railways?—Yes.

34642 Are you acquainted with those railways?—I have been over them.

34643 In fact, I think you were asked by the Commissioners?—I was asked by the Board of Works.

34644 To make a report?—Yes.

34645 First of all, let us see what you have to say with reference to the Secretary and Accountants' Department of that railway?—I have no fault to find with that.

34646 Where are the offices of the railway?—In Dame-street, Dublin.

34647 What about the traffic department?—Well, Mr. Sullivan the manager, of course, is not what I would call a railway expert, but he does his best, and it is an extremely poor country.

34648 Do you think the staff of the traffic department is excessive?—No; they might do away with a porter less in one or two places, but a very small saving would be made in that way.

34649 With regard to the locomotive, carriage and wagon, and permanent way department, what do you say?—Well, I find the whole thing, so far as the locomotive, carriage and wagon, and permanent way department is concerned, is run very extravagantly; in fact, I estimated that there might be a saving of some £8,000 or £9,000 a year. I really forget the exact figure.

34650 What was the cost for the locomotive expenses for the year ending the 31st October, 1905?—The cost was 5½d. per train mile, and for locomotive repairs for the same period, 3½d.; that was practically 10d. per mile.

34651 That is the expenses?—Yes, for the locomotive department.

34652 10d. per train mile?—Yes, 10d. per train mile.

34653 Have you any information as to what is the normal cost on other similar railways?—I should say that 6d. to 7d. should be ample. In fact, the Donegal line was worked at 6d. exactly, and had the West and South Clare been worked at the same price the saving on the locomotive department alone would have been £2,463.

34654 Mr. Aspinall.—You say 5½d. in your proof? And 3½.

34655 Chairman.—5½d. and 3½d.—that is 6d.?—Yes.

34656 That is a very important statement. Is there anything exceptional for that year?—No, there is nothing that I could see out of the way.

34657 But in previous years was the rate more

or less per train mile in the locomotive department?—I took it out for three years, and it runs about the same, I think you will find; I have not got the figures with me.

34658 Then we may assume that there was nothing special in 1906 to cause that excessive amount?—No.

34659 Mr. Aspinall.—Did you mean when you gave those figures of 5½d. and 3½d., that 5½d. meant the cost per train mile of running and 3½d. for the repairs?—Yes.

34660 Then did you systematically and regularly do your repairs on the Donegal Railway for 3½d. per train mile?—I did, and for less sometimes.

34661 Chairman.—You see the wear and tear is very light on them.

34662 Mr. Aspinall.—I do not make any comments, sir.

34663 Chairman (to the witness).—At any rate you did the work?—I did the work.

34664 I do not know whether we quite gathered the figure of saving that you think might have been effected if the locomotive department had been conducted with economy and efficiency—what was the saving?—£2,463 a year.

34665 Did you examine the permanent way?—I did; and for the year ending 31st October, for the 53 miles, it was equal to £101 8s. per mile of line, and the cost for the Donegal line for the year ending 30th April, 1906, for 106½ miles, was equal to £27 12s. 8d. per mile of line.

34666 There, again, there seems to be an enormous difference?—There is.

34667 Is there anything special in the line itself as compared with the Donegal?—No; in fact, it is not such an expensive line to work. What was more, the pay of the gangers on the West and South Clare was 12s. a week, and the surface men 12s.; the Donegal Company paid the gangers 18s., and the surface men 14s., as compared with 14s. and 12s.

34668 How do you account for the large difference in the cost of maintenance and permanent way department as compared with the Donegal?—I found at one place they had an extra staff, what is usually called a dying gang, averaging thirteen men constantly employed on work, which should have been done by the ordinary platelayers, such as ballasting. They seemed to have that special staff of thirteen extra men permanently.

34669 Who was directly responsible for the maintenance of this Clare Railway?—I believe Mr. Barrington, of Limerick.

34670 A separate official?—Yes.

34671 A permanent officer?—He was paid so much a year. I forget now what it is.

34672 To look after the permanent way?—He is a private engineer in Limerick. He does general work, and also supervises the West and South Clare Railways.

34673 Then there is no, what you would call, direct supervision by someone on the spot?—No, except by the ordinary permanent way inspector.

Mr. Order Barrington, Solicitor.—He mentions in the Report, sir, Mr. William Barrington, Engineer-in-Chief of the West Clare Railway among the officers—the regular officers of the line.

Witness.—Who is living in Limerick.

34674 Chairman.—We have got the figure of saving which you think, as an expert, might be effected

The efficiency of the chief officers of these railways.

Comparison of cost of working of the locomotive department with that of the Donegal Railway.

Estimate of possible saving in locomotive department.

in the locomotive department. Have you got the same figure with reference to the permanent way department?—I have.

34713. What do you say would have been the saving there, assuming that the line had been maintained at the same cost as the Donegal Railway?—That is for the permanent way?

34714. The permanent way department?—I do not know that I have got that. The gross working expenses on the West and South Clare lines—

34715. I do not mean that. You see I am taking it in sections. I am now dealing with the permanent way alone. If the permanent way had been maintained at the same ratio as the Donegal line, what would have been the saving for 1905 on the West and South Clare Railways?—The cost for the same on the Donegal line for the year ending 30th April, 1905, in 116½ miles was £25,048.

34716. I want to know what would have been the saving?—The saving for the year ending 31st October, 1905, would have been £25,846 12s. 6d. if it had been worked at the same cost.

34717. You have told us about the difference in wages, and you have also told us about the extra gangs?—Yes.

34718. And these are the reasons why you think the cost has been comparatively excessive on that railway?—That is my opinion. I find there is a starshipper at £104 a year, that is totally unnecessary; at least, it is far too much for a man to be employed in such a position as that.

34719. I may take it from what you said in reference to the locomotive and carriage department and the permanent way department, that, in your judgment, from long experience in Ireland, both those departments were run somewhat extravagantly?—That is my opinion. Of course, one reason for it is that they try to do their own repairs and construct their own carriages and wagons at Ennis for the purpose of giving local employment.

34720. That is their explanation?—I fancy that is the reason they would give.

34721. At any rate, you say emphatically that, with proper supervision and proper care, there might be an enormous saving in those two departments?—Undoubtedly.

34722. Now, with regard to the gross working expenses—I think we had better get those on the notes—what were the gross working expenses on the West and South Clare lines for the year ending 31st October, 1905?—They were £22,442, being an average of £404 10s. per mile of line. The gross working expenses of the Donegal line for the year ending 31st May, 1905, for 10½ miles, against 53 on the West and South Clare, were £24,622, the average being £356 per mile of line, and, had the West and South Clare lines been worked at the same cost as the Donegal line, the saving would have amounted to £2,475 for the year 1905, and this may be taken as the average for the last three years.

34723. Will you just explain why you have taken the Donegal line as a comparison?—Because it is a narrow gauge line, the same as the West and South Clare.

34724. They are both the same gauge?—They are both the same; the Clogher Valley and the Cavan and Leitrim and others are practically constructed upon the highways; in fact, the Clogher Valley practically runs over the whole on the highways, and the Cavan and Leitrim is about half upon the highways.

34725. In your judgment, the comparison with the Donegal is a fair comparison?—I consider it so.

34726. As to the West and South Clare lines, you can find no objection to them as far as the permanent way is concerned?—It is a fairly well equipped line.

34727. Is the Donegal kept up to a condition equal to the West Clare?—I consider better.

34728. With half the expenditure?—Yes; and on the Donegal line the gradients are very much heavier. The falling grade is 1 in 40 between Donegal and Killybegs.

34729. What is the worst gradient upon the other?—I think it is 1 in 60.

34730. Even in that respect the Clare Railways have an advantage over the Donegal?—Yes.

34731. What were the directors' fees on that railway?—For the three years ending 31st October, 1905, they averaged £215 1s. per annum; the total for the three years was £245 3s. 5d.

34732. What was the loss on the working of that

railway?—For the three years ending 31st October, 1905, it amounted to £36,471 10s., being an average loss of £12,820 10s. per year to be made good by the baroness.

34733. That deficiency had to be made good by somebody?—By the baroness; and 2 per cent. of that is recouped by the Treasury to the baroness.

34734. I think we have got in evidence what amount in the 2 is represented, but, perhaps, you do not know that?—I did not take that out.

34735. Mr. Sutton.—The maximum amount of the Treasury contribution per annum is £5,000.

34736. Otherwise, I think that as all that it is necessary to ask you about the Clare Railways, but now you are here, perhaps we can get you to give us the benefit of any general evidence that we may consider desirable?—On what line?

34737. I suppose you are generally acquainted with the other light railways in Ireland?—Yes, and I have had a good deal to do with developing the Irish railways myself.

34738. Take your own railway—when I say "your" I mean the line with which you were identified, the Donegal?—Yes.

34739. Have you been instrumental, at any rate, in getting that line extended?—I have.

34740. First of all, what is the origin of that line?—It was formerly a broad gauge line called the Finn Valley, from Stranorlar to Strabane.

34741. What is the length of that?—33½ miles.

34742. According to the evidence just now, the Donegal is about 105½—126½.

34743. Have you been instrumental, at any rate, in raising capital for those extensions?—Something like £300,000.

34744. From time to time, I suppose?—Yes, by degrees.

34745. Did you construct the line?—We did, with the exception of Donegal to Killybegs, and Stranorlar to Glenties. They were constructed by the Government, for about £230,000 to £240,000. From Stranorlar to Londonderry and Donegal to Ballyshannon was constructed by the Donegal Company at an expense of something like £300,000, and that money was raised in London, borrowing about £20,000 which we got in Ireland.

34746. Did you raise money in Ireland for these extensions?—About £20,000 altogether. All the rest was found in London. You could not raise the money in Ireland. A most curious thing is that the Irish people will put money into any wild scheme abroad, but they will not invest in their own country. There are ample mineral deposits now in the County of Donegal, to my own knowledge, that could have been developed to the immense good of the country, but you cannot find the capital.

34747. How would you suggest that the mineral products of Donegal should be developed?—I think that the Congested Districts Board or the Government should really come in and open them out properly, by giving a grant to the Congested Districts Board or to the Irish Industrial Association, or whatever you like to call it; it would be keeping the poor people in the country, and finding employment for them instead of going abroad.

34748. Then you are of opinion, I suppose, that there is a large undeveloped industry in Ireland that could be developed to the benefit of the country?—Undoubtedly.

34749. And there are many districts where a light railway would be an immense advantage to the districts?—That is my opinion.

34750. But you are also of opinion, I gather, that the money cannot be raised in Ireland?—No, it cannot.

34751. And that it cannot be raised without assistance?—It would pay the British Government to make the lines—even to subsidize them—for the purpose of keeping them open.

34752. Have you considered the general question that has been discussed before us over and over again, with reference to the nationalisation of railways?—I would not agree to that at all, because you had far better have competition. If the Government took over the lines, it would lead to jobbery.

34753. Do you consider that the best system is in operation now with all these independent companies?—No. The country should be divided into three or four railways, and my own view is that the Midland of England should retain the Belfast and Northern

Nov 11, 1907

Mr Robert Henry, Lawyer,
c/o, Railway
Expert,
Mr General
Manager and
Engineer of the
Donegal
Railway.

West and
South Clare
railways—
Average
yearly loss on
the working
here by the
baroness.

History of the
Donegal
Railway.

Killybegs and
Glenties ex-
tensions built
by the Govern-
ment.

Ample mineral
deposits await-
ing develop-
ment in
Donegal.

Suggestion as
to developing
industries in
Donegal and
other districts
in Ireland.

Nationalisa-
tion of the
railways
objected to.

Arrangement
of the Irish
railways into
three or four
systems sug-
gested.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr Robert
Henry Livsey,
c.s., Railway
Expert,
as General
Manager and
Engineer of
the Donegal
Railway.

Company
analysis of
the smaller
railways with
the larger
lines.

The Govern-
ment to
guarantee any
line involved
is working the
small lines
under the
arrangement
scheme.

Dublin and
South Eastern
lines to be taken
over by the
Great
Northern.

Irish fish rates
generally
regarded as
reasonable.

A general
question is
raised and facts
suggested.

County, and their own section from Londonderry to Strabane; the Great Northern of Ireland should then acquire all the rest of the railways touching that line, in fact, I give it in my statement somewhere.

34753. Without going into details, your idea is that it would be better for the country, if, instead of all these independent companies, there should be about three great systems?—Yes, that is my own view.

34754. And that each system should absorb the small railways in its own particular district?—Yes.

34755. How do you suggest that they should be absorbed?—I should say the Government could bring in a Bill to compulsorily amalgamate them.

34756. I quite understand compulsorily amalgamation, but the terms would have to be considered?—You see, many of these lines are not paying at all, and the Government have contributed to the financial guarantee, less two per cent., for many years, and I think the railways would be only too thankful to be rid of the liability. The Government, of course, would have to compensate the companies for taking them over.

34757. That is the point I want to get at. The Treasury will have to find the money to guarantee the large companies against any loss of money in working?—Yes. Take the West and South Clare line—

34758. Stop a minute; is not that Government purchase practically?—I do not see that.

34759. They would have to arrange with the smaller companies somehow?—Somehow.

34760. They would have to buy them up?—Yes.

34761. That is a purchase?—It is a purchase, but some of the other light railways the Government has constructed in Donegal and elsewhere, they have handed over to the working companies free. The Londonderry and Lough Swilly, the Government there provided something like £200,000 to £400,000.

34762. Let me see if I just thoroughly understand what you mean. Your idea is that three large companies should absorb the smaller ones in their districts, the smaller companies being bought out or arranged at any rate to be transferred to the large companies by Government in some way or other, and the large companies to be guaranteed by Government against loss in working these small railways?—Broadly, that is so. You could easily arrive at the average loss for, say, twenty years, and capitalise that.

34763. Do you consider that there would be a large saving in the general working of the railways?—Undoubtedly.

34764. That is to say, that with all the railways concentrated into three or four, there would be an enormous saving?—There is one difficulty I find with regard to the Dublin and South Eastern line. It is a question which company should take that, because the Great Western are running now into Waterford practically and Finsbury, and the North Western have £100,000 in the Dublin and South Easterns, and they would not agree to part with that. I should say that the Great Northern of Ireland should have that line.

34765. We need not go into that question. I am rather taking the broad principle, you know?—Yes.

34766. Have you had brought under your notice the evidence that has been given before us with reference to rates in Ireland?—Yes, I have; I have been reading it in the newspapers.

34767. Have you anything to say on that question? It is a very important subject?—My own view is, that so far as the fish traffic especially is concerned, the rates are absolutely reasonable, and they were fixed at the express desire of the Scotch fishermen.

34768. Yes, I do not think we have had so much complaint about the fish rates. I am speaking of the internal rates in the country—the local rates?—Yes. I know what you mean; some of them might be lowered.

34769. Some of them are excessive?—I consider so.

34770. They want revising?—They want revising. Of course, you must remember this, that in Ireland the traffic is small and your working expenses are fairly heavy. You cannot live upon a stone; but undoubtedly, I think myself, I take rather a broad view of this sort of thing—the railway companies should reduce the rates all round—the passenger fares as well should be reduced.

34771. Of course, you will admit at once that you cannot expect the railway companies to do that?—No.

34772. You cannot expect them?—They cannot very well afford to lose money.

34773. How do you suggest that the deficiency should be met; there is no question about the advantage, but how do you suggest that the deficiency should be met?—Let the Treasury find the money.

34774. By the Treasury?—Yes; they are robbing Ireland every year, and have done for years, of two or three millions a year.

34775. Will you carry it further and say that the Treasury should subsidize the railways for any loss they might incur by making experiments in the reduction of rates and fares?—That is my view.

34776. Still you object to the Government having anything to do with the railways?—Yes; I would not care to see them own the railways—in fact, I think it would be much better for the country to leave the railways free to these or four companies.

34777. Subsidised by the Treasury?—Subsidised by the Treasury.

34778. We have had a lot of evidence with reference to the rates for export from Ireland, I suppose you will agree generally with the view that in the interest of Ireland the lower the export rates are the better?—That is my view.

34779. And that every encouragement should be given by the railway companies to facilitate agricultural produce and other articles?—The same rules should be applied to exports from Ireland as are given to imports from England or abroad. That is undoubtedly my view, and always has been.

34780. And if the rates were made on that basis, you think a large increase of the exports might follow?—Well, you would encourage the traffic to grow, at any rate, in Ireland.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

34781. You think that a comparison of expenditure between the Clare line and the Donegal line is not unfair to the Clare line?—No, I do not.

34782. You think it rather favourable to them?—I consider that the West and South Clare line is expensively worked.

34783. You consider the Donegal line a more expensive line to keep up, and therefore in applying that scale to the Clare line you apply, you consider, a favourable scale?—I consider so—yes.

34784. The locomotive repairs on the Clare line cost five times as much per train mile as on the Donegal line; can you account for that?—Well, they have got so many men there—far too many, in fact.

34785. The permanent way repairs are more than double the Donegal line scale of cost?—Yes.

34786. And the gross expenses are nearly double?—Nearly double.

34787. If the Clare lines were worked on the Donegal line scale, you say there would be a saving of £6,476 a year?—Yes.

34788. Do you think that is really a practicable saving?—Oh, absolutely. I am dead certain of that.

34789. Can you say what proportion that saving bears to the total expenditure?—Something like about 35 per cent.

34790. The total loss for the three years was £26,511?—Yes, nearly £27,000.

34791. Of which the Treasury, I think, bore about £16,000, and £10,000 fell to the district?—It fell upon that very poor district.

34792. Upon an extremely poor district?—Very poor.

34793. If the expenditure had been upon the scale which you considered right and adequate that loss, instead of £26,500, would have been, in the three years, about £11,000?—That would have been it—about £11,000 or £12,000.

34794. It would have been, in three years, nearly one year's dividend, and after the Treasury had paid their contribution of 2 per cent., the levy upon the district would have been very slight?—Very slight.

34795. What do you propose as to the Clare line?—My own view is—of course if my scheme were carried out—that the Government should give the Great Southern and Western the control of these lines, and give them a grant of £120,000 to take them off their hands—let the county—relieve the baronies altogether—and let them re-graze it; then you would do away with all the baronial guarantees, and the Great Southern and Western could work that line very much better than the West and South Clare and cheaper; they would be able to develop

it in connection with the Rosslare and Flaguard route.

34795 That would be your anticipation, but a Company, as you know very well, looks to making a profit; are you certain that in regard to these Clare lines, and generally to lines in that condition, the great companies would be willing to take them over merely upon a guarantee against loss?—I believe myself that the Great Southern and Western would take over that line, I have been making inquiries, and if they were given a Government grant of £100,000, or £150,000 to re-gauge and make it a uniform gauge with their own system, they would be able to make Kiltash into a perfect Brighton of Ireland.

34797 It would take a good deal of making?—A large Company could do it very much better than the West and South Clare Company could. It is a lovely district.

34798 What would you do regarding the subscribed capital of the Clare lines?—The Great Southern and Western would take it over; of course they would have to do that as part and parcel of their own capital.

34799 Then they would have to pay dividend upon it?—They would have to pay dividend upon it where it is subscribed. You see the baronies are now paying a dividend plus the Board of Works—the Treasury.

34800 Yes; but if the Great Southern have to pay a dividend and are at the same time to be guaranteed against loss, surely that means that the Treasury would have in the event of loss to pay the dividend?—Well, of course, as I say, if the Treasury give the Great Southern and Western a grant of £100,000 or £150,000 (whatever is necessary to alter the gauge), probably the Great Southern and Western would then consider it worth their while to pay the dividend themselves without any baronial guarantee.

34801 But that is mere speculation, you see?—I do not see that it would make any bit of difference, because the Great Southern of Ireland and the Midland of England have taken over two, the Killybegs and Glenties lines with the Demergh line, and relieved the Government of all liability.

34802 You propose that the company taking over the lines should be guaranteed against loss. Have you observed that in recent years the railway grants, such as they are, have been from the Irish Development Grant?—Well, from the Treasury.

34803 There is a sum of money delineated to Irish use as an equivalent against grants to England and Scotland for education, and it is only out of that grant, which is now exhausted practically by the land purchase system, that any grants for railways have been made?—The Government should bring in a Bill I quite agree, for Irish development altogether. They do not give half enough money to Ireland.

34804 The Treasury hitherto has never accepted anything like undefined liability in connection with these lines; either they have paid a certain money grant, or they have guaranteed a defined proportion of dividend on a specified capital. Now, if you propose that the Treasury should become liable for the whole cost of the reconstruction of the lines and also for an unlimited loss in working—which would include loss by accidents, the cost of repairs and renewal of line and rolling-stock, do you consider that you are making a really practicable proposal?—Well, I consider so.

34805 Imagine yourself, now, coming at the head of a district to the Treasury—you, of course, go first to the Chief Secretary, he is always sympathetic, and never has any money—then you come to the Treasury, and you propose that the Treasury, instead of simply making a grant or guaranteeing a part of the dividend, shall make the line and hand it over to one of the railway companies, and guarantee that company by accepting an indefinite liability, without limit of time, for loss on working expenses including the expenses of accidents and renewals. If district after district came with such a petition, what do you think the answer would be? We must endeavour to frame some plan which is not only acceptable to Ireland, but is also workable?—I do not see why the British Treasury should not allocate a certain sum per annum to provide against that.

34806 I know what you consider their duties, but you know that Governmental duties in Ireland have

remained conspicuous by being undone?—I quite agree with you, very very largely.

34807 Now, on the question of additional lines, which is much the same question, do you consider that additional lines would be of great importance to Ireland?—I do.

34808 They would develop agriculture?—Yes.

34809 Develop manufactures, and develop the mineral resources, in which you have great faith?—Yes.

34810 And give employment, and check emigration?—Yes, and I say it is the duty of the Government to do that.

34811 Do you not think that the time has come for dealing with this question of transit in Ireland as a question of national interest? Do you think the provision of additional lines in Ireland should still be left to be dealt with in shreds and patches—each district by itself? Is there really any practical prospect that the numerous necessary lines in Ireland will be constructed if left to be dealt with in that unorganised manner, without any central authority and without any common fund?—No, one thing is, you would have to get the money from the British Treasury.

34812 The question of over-labouring to which you have referred cannot be much longer ignored?—No.

34813 Suppose there was a representative body in Ireland administering the railways, a grant might be made to it as an offset against over-labouring?—Yes.

34814 With regard to the additional lines being constructed in the public interest, without laying a levy upon districts, do you not think that a body, representative and sympathetic, in Ireland, would be a body to which you could appeal with confidence to construct a line where required?—I would certainly have more faith in such a body than I have—almost—in the British Parliament to-day—because you get nothing from them except what you can squeeze out of them.

34815 But an Irish representative body, having resources (and of course you must assume that if such a body was created it must have resources), would be an authority to which you would look to regard the public interest, and to take the cost of these lines into a common budget, instead of adhering to the old warrent idea of making each district responsible for local transit?—That is a difficult problem to solve.

34816 It is, but we have to try to solve it?—I am very sympathetic, you know, with your views.

34817 If private capital is not forthcoming?—The Treasury must find it.

34818 If the baronial guarantee have to be given up?—I say they are very bad things altogether, baronial guarantees; they lead to no end of extravagance.

34819 If the Treasury will do nothing, and the Irish Development Grant is exhausted would you systematise the matter, so that where public interest justified the construction of a line, you would take the cost upon a common budget?—I quite agree with you.

34820 The fundamental question here is the question of the reduction of rates, and I think you have agreed, in reply to the Chairman, that the Irish exporter should be placed upon a fair footing?—He should be placed upon an equal footing with the Continental importer, certainly.

34821 The export rates, you know, form a large proportion of the Irish receipts?—Yes.

34822 Is it not equally obvious that the Irish producer who wants to sell in Ireland, whether agricultural produce or manufactured goods ought to be placed upon an equal footing with the importer into Ireland?—That is my view, and always has been.

34823 Therefore, it follows that the Irish export rates in competition with the rates into Great Britain from abroad, and the Irish inland rates in competition with the import rates into Ireland should be very largely and liberally reduced?—I think so, because take eggs, several million pounds worth of eggs are brought into England, and there is no certainty reason why Ireland should not do the whole lot—poultry, Danish butter, bacon, and eggs.

34824 Railways cannot afford to make reductions, can they?—Not very well.

34825 And the question is, how the reductions are to be made?—It is a question, no doubt, for Government subsidy.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. Robert Henry Llewellyn, C.B., Railway Expert, ex-General Manager and Engineer of the Demergh Railway.

The provision of further necessary railway in Ireland held to be the duty of the Government.

Ireland's claim to a Treasury grant as an offset to over-labouring.

The formation of a representative body in Ireland to deal with the transit problem as a whole.

Placing Government assistance for railway expansion, the cost to be placed upon a common budget.

A revision of existing rates such as would be workable.

Irish industries advocated.

But as private railway companies are unable to reduce, a Government subsidy is recommended.

Nov 11, 1963.

Mr. Robert
Henry Liversay,
c/o, Railway
Engineer,
ex-General
Manager and
Engineer of the
Bengal
Railway.

State acqui-
sition of the
railways
approved,
provided the
public benefit
is secured.

Whether
it is best for the
advantage of
Ireland
should be
done.

The question
of competi-
tion.

A general
reduction of
rates by all
routes, pre-
ferred to the
reduction of
the principle
of competi-
tion.

34826. I think you understood public finance well enough to know that a grant for any purpose in Ireland must come out of the balance of Irish revenues and upon that balance there are many claims—urgent claims—poor law, venereal, venereal drainage, education, tuberculosis, and many others?—Especially tuberculosis.

34827. In endeavouring to secure reform in this railway question, would it not be well, if possible, to deal with it without proposing to make demands upon the revenue for subsidies from year to year?—Yes.

34828. I know your views are in favour of private management?—Yes, as against the State.

34829. You are an old railway official, and I am not surprised that your views should be in favour of private management, but I put this consideration to you, suppose, by public acquisition of the lines, a large surplus were left out of the present net profits. Suppose that on public credit the necessary capital could be raised, and a large surplus left, and that a further surplus could be obtained by concentrated working of the system, amounting in all to half a million a year, that would enable a reduction in rates and fares to be made, and the experiment to be tried without any demands upon the public purse at the outset. Would not that be an immense advantage to hinge for the sake of retaining private management?—Undoubtedly it would, but it would be a very difficult problem to solve.

34830. I admit the difficulty, and I also admit that we are only at the preliminary stage; we can only proceed at present on the basis of assumptions, but pressing that such results could be secured by public acquisition of the lines do you not think that the interests of Ireland dictate that that course should be taken?—I quite agree with you as far as that goes. We have got to consider and study the interests of Ireland, and if Ireland is benefited by State acquisition or nationalisation, or anything else you like to call it, I would be quite agreeable.

34831. That is very satisfactory evidence. You take the stand that whatever is shown or seen to be meet to the advantage of Ireland ought to be done?—Yes.

34832. Now, just a word about competition. The railway companies do not compete in Ireland?—Oh, they do.

34833. I mean, you know, that railways are a very peculiar matter?—Well, they say they have neither got a soul to be saved nor a back to be kicked.

34834. Other traders can compete, because if they are beaten in competition they can remove, or perhaps go into a different trade, but if a railway company is once there it must stay there, and it can do nothing but carry?—That is so.

34835. A railway that is challenged by a lower rate must either come down to that rate or lose the traffic?—No doubt.

34836. So that if it is obvious that there can be no permanent competition in rates?—You could give rebates, only they are illegal.

34837. I should think you would hardly put forward a secret rebate as a public advantage?—They should not be allowed, of course.

34838. The companies compete as to facilities, but that means that the trader, as far as competition acts at all, has his goods carried by a longer route, and probably a much slower route. Do you think that such competition is at all equivalent in value (if it has any value) to a reduction of the rates and despatch of the traffic always by the shortest route?—No.

34839. A word about amalgamation. You see, your amalgamation plan goes only part of the way, but I think you are willing to travel the whole way. Your amalgamation plan would reduce what you call competition?—If you converted the whole of the lines in Ireland into one concern and made a State concern of it you would do away with competition altogether.

34840. What would you substitute for it. The hypothesis upon which a public system of railways for Ireland would be founded would be that the resources of the system should be available for a general reduction of rates. A general reduction of rates, accompanied by despatch by the shortest route, would be incomparably better for the trader than any competition?—I quite follow you.

34841. You agree with that?—I do.

Examined by Mr. AGNEW.

34842. First, about these secret rebates; do you say that they exist?—I have known them to exist.

34843. You have known them to exist?—Yes.

34844. Do you know them to exist, or believe them to exist, now?—I have no doubt they are still in existence in some parts, I could not give you a definite case.

34845. Do you believe them to exist to any important extent?—That I could not say; I know they have existed.

34846. Does that mean that you know things are not so bad as they were?—Yes. Probably that is the proper way to put it. I have known traffic carried for nothing before now, even at a dead loss.

34847. Is Ireland?—Yes.

34848. How long ago?—Five or six years ago.

34849. That, you think, has come to an end?—I fancy so; in fact, I am sure of it.

34850. You say they should not be allowed, of course we know they are not allowed now?—Not openly.

34851. I mean, they are as illegal as they can be?—Certainly.

34852. We have had a good many people who have spoken of secret rebates, but nobody has given positive information that such rebates exist on which we could deal with the case?—It is a difficult matter, the private trader gets the benefit, of course, when he is given a rebate.

34853. You are not able to help in the direction of getting positive information; all you can say is that it is better than it was, but it is not cured altogether?—No, I do not think it is.

34854. You entirely agree with my friend, Mr. Sexton, on the assumption that the State would be able to raise the money, and make the capital charge less by using its credit, and to economise in working, the State system would be an advantage. That is what I understood your view to be?—Yes.

34855. In your view, would there be three advantages in practice. Do you think the State would work cheaper?—That is a question.

34856. What is your view?—You have expressed rather a strong one in your proof?—My own view is that there should be three or four companies.

34857. Is your view that the State system would be more satisfactory from the point of view of work?—If you amalgamate the whole—put them all under one system, you might do the work cheaper than it is done now.

34858. I am speaking, not of making it into one Company, so to speak, but of putting it into the hands of the State. I do not want to read your statement in your proof to you; I do not know whether you have put it higher than you desired.

34859. Mr. Sexton—That refers to an Imperial Department, not to a representative Irish body.

34860. No.

34861. Mr. Agnew—The statement I was alluding to here is "I do not think the acquisition by the State of the railways would be of the smallest benefit; on the contrary, it would lead to no end of pabery, and put a stop to all competition."—That is the view I strongly held to.

34862. That is the view you hold?—Yes; that is, if you give it to the Imperial Department.

34863. You do not say that here?—No.

34864. I am glad I got that out. That, you think, would be the effect of handing it over to the Imperial Government?—I think so.

34865. I understand you would have no such fear if it were handed over to an Irish body?—I would not like to say that.

34866. Is that intended to apply?—You might have a Commission—an Irish Commission—because there are plenty of gentlemen in Ireland to form a kind of little Board of Trade, such as the Railway Commission.

34867. But neither the Board of Trade, nor the Railway Commission, as we know them at present, is executive; one is administrative, the other is judicial. Are you proposing an Executive Commission, which should actually manage the railways?—Yes, that is what I should propose.

34868. That would not directly be under the control of Parliament, other Imperial or Irish?—No.

34869. You would not like to put it in a body directly controlled by Parliament?—No, not a Parliamentary body.

34868. Either a Parliamentary body or an Irish elected body.—Well, I scarcely know what to say to that.

34869. If you do not know what to say, I cannot say it for you, so I will not say any more.

34870. Mr. Stewar.—I think you agreed that a representative body, responsible to the Irish public, would be likely to manage the system efficiently, because the success of the system would depend upon economy and efficiency; therefore, persons responsible to the country would be most likely to be efficient.—You would imagine so.

34871. Mr. Ascroft.—Another point on that matter: Can, you say, of course, has a great interest in the development of railways in Clare?—Yes.

34872. Clare also has a considerable interest in getting through connections to Cork and Dublin?—Yes.

34873. Has Clare any serious interest in the development of Donegal?—No.

34874. Has Donegal any serious interest in the development of Clare?—No.

34875. Would not the natural effort be that Donegal would pull its hardest to get all it could, and not take much interest in Clare?—Naturally.

34876. And Clare would pull its hardest to get all it could, and would not take much interest in Donegal?—Certainly not.

34877. So that we could not expect a big railway, that has no interest in the whole of the country, to develop each part of it impartially, could we?—I do not know. There would have to be a railway gentleman, I suppose, to go exploring all over Ireland; they would have to take it in turn.

34878. You could not expect the directors in Donegal to vote enthusiastically funds for Clare?—I do not know.

34879. You said they would not take any interest?—In the ordinary course, they would not; but I do not see why they should not if there was a body elected to control the railways of Ireland, for instance.

34880. An elected body?—Yes; they would be an independent body altogether, and would go about the country and see where—

34881. I was speaking rather of their being under the control of a large body—a body—I do not want to use the word Parliament, because it has, perhaps, a political sense, but a popularly elected body that would represent all Ireland—a hundred members, or something of that kind. They could not, of course, go all over Ireland?—No, but they could appoint an expert to go over it.

34882. So far as the elected members of Donegal are concerned, they would not be enthusiastic in Clare?—If you got one common fund for the whole country—

34883. You would expect Donegal members to want it all for Donegal?—Not the whole of it.

34884. You would expect them to want all they could get?—I suppose we all do that.

34885. You would expect the members for Clare to want all they could get, and not think much about Donegal?—It is human nature.

34886. It is human nature that each should pull for its own interests in an elected body?—Yes, I suppose so.

34887. Now I want to go to another point. Did I understand you to suggest that if the Great Southern took over the West Clare line the Government ought to guarantee them against loss?—No; give them a specific sum of money to re-gauge it, and let them relieve the ratepayers of Clare of all liability.

34888. The sum you mentioned, of 2100,000, would, I suppose, re-gauge it and bring it up to a tolerably good standard?—Yes, I believe so.

34889. It would not do much more than that?—No.

34890. The Great Southern would have to work it, and pay five per cent. on its capital?—Four per cent.

34891. Very likely it is four per cent., it does not matter which it is. They would have to work it, so that there would be enough money to do that but they would have to pay 4 per cent. on the capital, and they would not earn it, would they?—I do not know.

34892. Not to start with?—I would not like to say.

34893. You say like to say they would?—No.

34894. In that case the Government would have to give them—?—The big line, such as the Great Southern and Western could afford to drop 42,000 or 43,000 a year in dividend, because they would work

that line very much cheaper, but they would be able to develop it.

34895. Take it at that; suppose it would mean dropping 53,000 or 43,000 a year, would you propose that that should be put upon them whether they wanted it or not?—I suppose the Great Southern and Western would be sufficiently strong and patriotic enough to stand that; they carry a big balance forward.

34896. Suppose they said that, strong and patriotic though they were, they did not want that burden, would you force it upon them?—Well, I fancy myself they would take it.

34897. Take it this way. Suppose somebody made a branch connecting with the Donegal Railway, and suppose they said you should work it on certain terms, and you said that would mean a loss of 2300 a year to the Donegal Railway, and you had not been able to see that that was a reasonable calculation, would you then think it fair that it should be thrust down your throat?—I do not know. We have taken bigger risks than that.

34898. Suppose you did not want that, would you think it fair to have it thrust down your throat?—If it was good for the country I would take the risk.

34899. But suppose the Great Southern said they did not want to take it, would you shove it down their throats?—I do not know what I should do.

34900. Would you like to have it shoved down your throat on the Donegal?—I would not mind very much; I have had a lot shoved down my throat in my time.

34901. Now, about this comparison with the Donegal Railway; I will not take more than one or two questions, I do not want to go into any detail; you have mentioned that the locomotive repairs on the West Clare was 3½d., roughly, and on your own line, 3s. 1-2d.

34902. You were not building new engines out of renewal?—No, we were keeping them in repair.

34903. No doubt; but you were not adding new engines out of revenue, that clearly upsets all comparison, does it not?—I suppose it does.

34904. If they wanted more engines, and could not get any capital, what were they to do except build them out of revenue?—I do not know that they have.

34905. That has been their evidence to us, that they have added?—I could not make head or tail out of their evidence about selling stock.

34906. Chairman.—You were not here; I asked the question, and Mr. Levey said so.

34907. Mr. Ascroft.—I will just put it in this way as a definite issue of fact, could you say positively that in that year no engine had been added or rebuilt out of capital?—You could rebuild them out of revenue. We have put ourselves, that half-year that I compared, something like 4700 or 4800 for renewals and reserve fund.

34908. I will just put it in this way; as far as you know, there is no addition to the rolling stock out of capital in the half-years that you are comparing?—Not that I know of.

34909. Of course that raises quite a definite point, and they will deal with it. I notice that the directors are getting three hundred pounds a year?—Something like that.

34910. You do not make a comparison in that case?—Because we do not pay directors' fees.

34911. Do you think 3300 is more than the average?—No.

34912. I do not know how many there are?—No, but a branch railway, being paid by baronies—the ratepayers—I take it to myself that they should not draw fees at all, except supply their own out-of-pocket expenses.

34913. Just one other point. It would not do to run away with the idea that Kilmish or Kilmee were really going to be quite a Brighton, would it?—I do not know; they are very nice places, and you never know until you really go and develop them.

34914. It is a very pretty place, about 200 miles from Dublin, is it not?—About that.

34915. Brighton is about fifty miles from London?—Yes.

34916. Chairman.—That was only a figure of speech.

34917. Mr. Ascroft.—Seriously, you could not hope to do anything beyond making it a tourist resort in

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. Robert Henry Levey, M.P., Railway Expert, and General Manager and Engineer of the Donegal Railway.

The equity of compulsory acquisition of Irish railways.

Cost of locomotive repairs on the Clare line.

The charging of additional rolling stock to revenue.

The payment of directors' fees on branch guaranteed railways condemned.

The development of Kilmish and Kilmee as popular watering places.

Nov. 11, 1897.

Mr. Robert Henry Lister, C.E., Railway Expert, ex-General Manager and Engineer of the Donegal Railway.

The development of the West and Donegal Railway is popular watering places.

A Government subsidy to cross-channel steamers carrying Irish produce recommended.

Class Railways—locomotive expenditure.

Parity between the Donegal Railway and the Clontarf Railway.

The relative advantages of broad and narrow gauge lines in the event of further extensions in Ireland.

in the summer; you could not make it a residential place?—No, it is a tourist work.

34016. Mr. Austin.—By efficient railway service it might be made a first-rate watering place?—I consider it so.

34017. Mr. Austin.—You might bring it within five hours of Dublin?—Yes, easily.

34018. That is beyond the limit of a week-end journey under ordinary circumstances, is it not? It would take the best part of Saturday to get down, and the best part of Monday to get back?—I do not know; a jaded Dublin or Belfast man would not think very much of it if he could get an absolute change like that.

34019. You could not have a large traffic going there for a day or two?—If you give the accommodation and provide the attractions, you would look at Blackpool.

34020. How far are the people off who keep Blackpool alive? They are an hour or an hour and a half in the train?—Of course, that is Lancashire people.

34021. Yes, and it flows on Lancashire, they do not go from the South of England, do they?—That I do not know.

Examined by Mr. ASHMAN.

34022. You rather advocated the Irish railways being assisted in any reduction of rates that was made; do you advocate any Government subsidy being given to the cross-channel steamers for the purpose of carrying Irish produce to England?—I think so. If they do it in one case, they should do it in the other, so far as steamers are concerned.

34023. Are you aware that the Danish Government subsidize the steamers that carry Danish goods to England?—No.

34024. That is, steamers belonging to Danish owners; the British ship-owner does not get any subsidy?—I was not aware of that.

34025. With regard to the West Clare Railway, you reported on that, and you have been rather strong in your comments about the expenditure?—Yes.

34026. May not that large expenditure be due to the fact that the railways had been very short of rolling stock; therefore the engines had been worked to death, and their expenses for repairs have been enormously high?—I have taken out the whole particulars for three years, and compared them carefully.

34027. I have had the advantage of going over the Donegal Railway, you know, from end to end, but I have not had the advantage of going over the West Clare; the two lines are very different, are they not?—Very different.

34028. You say the locomotives of the Donegal are in first rate condition?—Yes.

34029. The circumstances are not quite the same?—I do not know.

34030. Would you not agree with me that the average rate for repairs and renewals of locomotives and engines on railways works out to something like 3d. per mile?—Yes.

34031. So that the figure for the West Clare line is not very exceptional?—A broad gauge line is a very different thing.

34032. I know that?—I have had thirty years' new of locomotive work.

34033. I want to be quite sure that the circumstances are absolutely the same. Do you think they are?—I consider so. I do not see why the figures should be any more.

34034. Have they had all the advantages on the West Clare that you have had on the Donegal?—So far as I know.

34035. You have expressed the opinion that additional railways ought to be made in Ireland; do you think that narrow gauge railways ought to be made anywhere in Ireland?—Well, I am rather a narrow gauge man myself, because I think you can work them very much cheaper.

34036. You think that plan has a very great advantage?—Yes, to certain poor districts.

34037. If additional lines were required in poor districts, you would make them narrow gauge?—That all depends of course, upon whether they could be worked in conjunction with the Donegal line. If it formed a direct connection it should be of the same uniform gauge of three feet, but if connected with the Great Northern of Ireland, I should leave it to them

as to whether they would have it narrow gauge or the full five feet three inches.

34038. Do you think that even if you connect up with some of the main lines you would still make the new branch line a narrow gauge?—No, I do not say that.

34039. Chairman.—He said that if they connected with the broad gauge, they would make them broad gauge.

34040. Mr. Aspinall.—Quite so. I want to get at this point; you say you would not do that on account of the expense of transferring the goods from the one to the other?—You could adopt any patent transshipping apparatus, that would do away with that.

34041. I know the arrangement you have got in use for transferring goods from the Donegal line to the Great Northern of Ireland, but has that so far affected the cost at all to neutralize the other disadvantages?—I think so.

34042. What do you say is the cost per ton of transferring goods from the narrow gauge to the broad gauge, or vice versa, if you have not got your patent apparatus?—Europeans a ton at the very least.

34043. If you had this arrangement by which you transfer the top of the wagon from the narrow gauge to the broad gauge or vice versa, what would be the cost of it?—Practically nothing—infinite.

34044. It must be something?—Three to six tons would not cost more than a penny, because the whole thing is done in a moment.

34045. Is that taking into account the capital outlay necessary?—No.

34046. Because you have to prepare your sidings end on, so that you have to transfer the goods or the top of the wagon from the narrow gauge to the broad gauge, or vice versa.

34047. In addition to that you have a heavy expenditure on marshalling and sorting those wagons so as to get them in pairs?—Yes.

34048. Therefore you cannot say that it costs nothing?—It is very small.

34049. Chairman.—Will it cost a halfpenny, including interest on the capital?—I do not think it would.

34050. What is it altogether?—Well, say a penny for five or six tons.

34051. Mr. Aspinall.—Then your view is that by adopting appliances of that kind you could almost neutralize the disadvantage of the narrow gauge as against the broad?—You would neutralize it.

Examined by Colonel HURMESON FOR

34052. With reference to that last point of Mr. Aspinall, you put the cost of transshipping from the narrow gauge to the broad gauge at 3d. per ton?—Yes, if you handle it.

34053. Taking the traffic that passed over the South and West Clare branches in 1895, there were 27,000 tons of goods and 9,000 tons of minerals; the saving on that alone would be £650 a year. There would be a saving on the transshipment alone of the goods that passed over that system of £450 a year?—Yes, that is, if re-constructed.

34054. Of course, one great economy that could be effected if the system were transformed from a narrow to a broad gauge would be in the rolling-stock which at present is a great difficulty?—Yes.

34055. Now, as regards that point of rolling-stock, can you give us any idea as to what rolling-stock was provided as the first instance for that line?—Was it adequate for the requirements of the line?—I could not say.

34056. I think Mr. Barrington's name has been mentioned once or twice in connection with it, and looking over the evidence he gave to the Allport Commission in respect to that line in 1888, he said that the cost of the rolling-stock on that line was about £750 a mile, so I suppose that was correct?—I have no doubt, Mr. Barrington should know.

34057. That was a very fair provision?—Yes.

34058. If that amount of rolling-stock was provided, it seems a little unaccountable that ever since the opening of that line there has been a very heavy expenditure in providing new rolling-stock out of revenue, because they had no capital to provide. Going back to the year 1885—ten years ago—the

expenditure on permanent way locomotives and so on, was nearly £16,000. It is £22,000 now, I think, you said, ten years ago it was £16,000; in 1905 it was £22,486, and last year, I see by the reports, it was again £22,490; so that this expenditure has not been an exceptional item; it has been incurred, so far as I can gather from the reports, year by year.—Year by year.

34958 One can hardly imagine that rolling stock could depreciate to such an enormous extent as that?—I saw myself in the workshops there (and I consider it is very objectionable) that they were building the under frame out of deal and pitch-pine instead of oak. You know that is very extravagant.

34959 I do not pretend to know very much about these matters, but I put it to you as a railway expert, looking at the figures of this enormous expenditure year after year, it seems to imply that there must have been extravagance or something abnormal?—There are enough painters and fitters and so on there to eat up the whole line almost.

34960 Now, with regard to the receipts of that line, I think the receipts on the West Clare and South Clare systems compare very favourably with the receipts on all the other lines of light railway in Ireland.—Yes.

34961 I think they are higher than on any other line of light railway except the Cork and Muskerry?—Yes.

34962 I think the receipts last year show an increase of nearly £1,000 over those of 1905, which is very satisfactory?—Yes.

34963 And they show a very considerable increase for the last ten years?—For three years.—Yes.

34964 And the development has been steadily maintained?—Yes.

34965 I gather from that that if the line was put in a better state, it would amply justify any expense that might be incurred in putting it into that better condition?—I think so.

34966 I desire you know that some years ago Mr Gerald Balfour proposed a grant of £60,000; he said that under certain conditions he would be prepared to recommend a grant of £60,000 in respect to another light railway in East Clare for which there was some demand?—I will assume that that is so.

34967 You know the district, I presume?—Yes.

34968 Of course one Ministry is not bound by the promises or recommendations of its predecessors, but I suppose it would go for something that some years ago Mr Gerald Balfour made an offer of a certain grant of money; I suppose it would carry a certain amount of weight with the present Government?—It ought to.

34969 Do you think that instead of devoting the £60,000 or such other sum as the present Government might be prepared to give to the construction of a new line in East Clare, it would be better devoted to transforming this West and South Clare system into a broad gauge line? If you get a sum of money like £60,000, it would go a long way towards doing so?—It is fifty-three miles, you could not do it under £2,000 a mile, and that would be £106,000.

34970 I understood you to say that it would cost £100,000, and a sum of £60,000 would go a long way towards it?—It would go a long way towards it.

34971 In your opinion, would that money be better expended in going as far as it would in transforming that line—converting it into a broad gauge system—than in providing a new line altogether?—I should say decidedly so.

34972 With regard to the companies which were interested between the Donagel and the West and South Clare line, as a matter of fact, I think the Donagel line has been in the happy position of getting a large amount of financial assistance from time to time?—Two loans.

34973 I think it had a grant from the Government of something like £80,000, and also a guarantee?—The loans were paid off and fresh capital raised.

34974 Quite so, but at any rate it assisted them; is the first instance they got a grant of that amount?—Yes, £50,000 Government subsidy.

34975 A guarantee of 3 per cent. on £17,000?—Yes—£16,000 it was. If I remember right, there was £30,000 borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board. That was paid off.

34976 I do not say that they were not paid off, but it was a considerable assistance in the early stages. At any rate it assisted them. Then, of course, you had two extensions, the Stranorlar and Glenties, and the Stranorlar, Donagel, and Killybegs, towards which you have a grant of practically £240,000?—Yes.

34977 £244,000, I think, to be accurate—about a quarter of a million of money?—Yes.

34978 Against that the unfortunate West Clare Railway people have simply had a Government guarantee on two hundred odd thousand pounds, of which the baroness have had to pay the largest share?—Yes.

34979 You are aware that some years ago the Treasury liability was redeemed in respect of the guarantee on the Donagel line?—Yes.

34980 I think they paid something like £20,000, under that guarantee they were liable for £540 a year; on the £17,000 the 3 per cent would be £510?—Yes.

34981 But, as a matter of fact, owing to the line being worked at a profit, their liability was reduced to something like £260?—Yes.

34982 On those figures, the Treasury redeemed their liability by the payment of a sum of something like £20,000?—I forget the exact figures.

34983 Do not you think that it would be a legitimate argument to suggest, or to recommend, that they might be prepared to see their way to redeem their liability with respect to this unfortunate West Clare system on something like similar terms?—I should say so.

34984 You are aware that they can pay up to 33½ years' purchase?—Yes.

34985 Under their liability the Government are paying something like £5,000 a year?—Yes.

34986 And apparently under the existing prospects and conditions, that liability may be continued indefinitely?—Indefinitely.

34987 So that it would be sound financial policy to redeem that on anything like four terms?—I should say so, because County Clare is such an awfully poor county.

34988 We will say to redeem a liability of £5,000 at thirty years' purchase—that of once is £150,000?—Yes.

34989 That would go a long way; the liability of the barony would still continue, but a capital sum of £150,000 would, of course, redeem a great many of the charges and would place the baroness in a very much more favourable position than they occupy at the present?—I think the Great Southern and Western would be only too glad to take over that line if the Government would give them £150,000, and relieve the baroness.

34990 And where the baroness—that is the point I wished to direct your attention to; that if the Treasury could see their way to put it on the simple ground of financial business, it would be good policy to redeem on such terms, and probably a working company, such as the Great Southern and Western, would be prepared to take a risk such as we were discussing?—I think so.

34991 The only other question I would ask you is with regard to this body of control which you would like to see established. I gather that you would wish to see some body over and above the board of experts who would administer the railway system?—Yes.

34992 I gather also that you would hardly be prepared to let that public body be the General Council of County Councils?—No; they would all want free passes, then.

34993 Would you think it well if between the public and the Railway Board some such body as Commissioners, such as they have in the Commonwealth of Australia, were placed in charge?—Yes, three Commissioners.

34994 Three Commissioners who would be responsible for the terms under which the amalgamation, which I understand you advocate, should be carried out, and would also be in the same position and exercise the same duties and functions as the Commissioners do in the Commonwealth?—Yes.

34995 You think that would be satisfactory?—I think so.

34996 With whom would you leave the appointment of these Commissioners, because, of course, they would have to be appointed by somebody? With whom, in the first instance, would you propose to

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. Robert Henry Lowry, Esq., Railway Expert, ex-General Manager and Engineer of the Donagel Railway.

Cost of the redemption of the Treasury liability on the West Clare Donagel Railway.

Suggestion that the Treasury liability in respect of the Clare Railway should be redeemed.

The Barones would be placed in a more favourable position thereby.

Suggested formation of a body similar to the Australian Railway Commissioners to control the Irish railways.

Nov. 11, 1897.

Mr. Robert
Hempfling,
c/o, Railway
Export,
and General
Manager and
Engineer of
the Douglas
Railway.

The appointment
of the new Railway
Commissioners by the
Government in the first
instance recommended.

Plenty of
capital
available in
Ireland.

leave the appointment—I suppose the Board of
Trade in London, in the first instance.

35007. Do you think that would be a satisfactory
tribunal to entrust with the appointment?—Unless
they get Home Rule, you know. I do not know
what you would do then.

35008. Would you be prepared to allow the British
Government to appoint them in the first instance?—
I suppose they would have to.

35009. But would you be satisfied if they did?—
Yes, I think so.

35010. Sir Herbert Jekyll—You said something
about the difficulty of raising capital in Ireland,
you do not suggest that there is any want of money
in Ireland, only that Irish money is invested abroad?

—Oh, yes, there is plenty of money in Ireland.
Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—With regard to
the cost of working the South and West
Clare lines in Ireland, Mr. William Barrington,
who was connected with that line as
inspector and engineer-in-chief, was not con-
sulted or referred to in any way before the report was
made. What the Company propose to do is to bring

him before you to give full evidence with regard to
the West Clare and South Clare generally, and par-
ticularly as to the working of the permanent way
and locomotive departments, which have been chal-
lenged. There are numerous things, but at present
I am not going to say more than I have.

Chairman.—What I was going to suggest is that
we will take that as part of the railway case.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Yes.

35011. Mr. Stenton (to the witness).—With regard
to the investment of Irish capital in Ireland, would
you agree that in Ireland, as in every other country,
the investor is governed by the prospect of profit?—
Undoubtedly.

35012. And if your suggestions were carried into
effect, and the springs of Irish industry set free, have
you any doubt that Irish capital would then be
forthcoming with the prospect of profit so improved?
—I see your point.

35013. I mean, if an Irishman sees profit by
investment in his own country, would he not prefer to
invest his capital there?—He ought to.

35014. And would, probably?—And probably would.

Mr W. C. R. Cox examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr W. C. R.
Cox, General
Manager Ballinacorney,
Tinslague, and Court-
mashery
Railway.

History of the Ballinacorney,
Tinslague, and Court-
mashery
Railway.

Length and
gauge of line

The railway
imperfectly
constructed, and poorly
equipped

Date of open-
ing of line, and
description
of the
traffic.

35005. Tell us, Mr. Cox, what you are—I am
general manager of the Tinslague and Court-
mashery Railway. I am also the traffic manager of
the Cork, Brandon, and South Coast Railway, but I
do not wish to say anything of the Cork, Brandon,
and South Coast Railway. I only represent the
Tinslague and Courtmashery Railway here. In the
case of the Cork and Brandon Railway it is among
the Associated Railways.

35006. You are merely appearing here on behalf
of this small light railway?—Yes, sir.

35007. Mr. Awerch.—The Tinslague and Court-
mashery is not worked by the Cork and Brandon?—
No, sir.

35008. They allow you to act as agent of the little
line, but your Company does not work it?—No, sir.
35009. Chairman.—Tell us where this railway is?
—It is from Ballinacorney Junction to Courtmashery
sherry.

35010. Courtmashery being on the coast?—Yes.

35011. And a seaside place?—A seaside place.

35012. Well, it is practically a little tramway run-
ning between the junction and the seaside?—It is a
broad gauge line, sir.

35013. Then I will say a light railway?—Yes, sir.

35014. What is the length of it?—43 miles.

35015. And it is worked as an independent com-
pany?—It is worked as an independent company.

35016. How was it constructed?—How was the cap-
ital raised for it?—Might I just go onto the history
of it for a couple of minutes?

35017. Yes?—The district was surveyed, and
there was an enterprising contractor. I think you
will find that that is common to a great many Irish
railways, that the light railways were constructed
in this way. He got hold of one or two independent
gentlemen in the district, and persuaded them as to
the possibilities of the line. They formed a com-
pany. The ratemakers there in the district guaran-
teed 5 per cent., and of course they got the Treasury
to consent to a guarantee of two of that; and the
line was then constructed. But what I wish to say
is that, you see, the contractor is the predominant
partner all through the piece.

35018. Mr. Stenton.—Mr. Worthington?—Mr.
Worthington. And then they got the Order in
Council. And it is rather imperfectly constructed,
and very poor provision made for rolling stock. The
Board of Trade inspector certifies as to the safety
of the working of the line, and it is duly opened. You
see the contractor floats the capital and he slips
away then and leaves the legacy to the ratemakers.

35019. Chairman.—When was it opened about?—
1891.

35020. Then, the line runs down to the coast. And
is there a railway connection with the wharf?—Yes.
It runs right out on the pier. I say that there should
be an undertaking on the part of the parent com-
pany to work these lines before they are constructed
in this way.

35021. But that was not done in this case?—No.

35022. The parent, as you call it, being the Cork
and Brandon?—Yes.

35023. Well, now, what is there imported into this
little place, carried over the railway—principally
grain, is it?—Coal, grain, grass, and we send away
3,000 tons of sea-sand annually. It is brought in
lighters alongside of the wharf and loaded into the
wagons.

35024. That is for agricultural purposes?—Yes;
we send it to the inland districts for agricultural pur-
poses.

35025. The sand containing so much lime?—Yes,
lime.

35026. A percentage of lime?—Yes. We send it
thirty-five miles.

35027. Now, with regard to the way in which the
traffic is worked, and with regard to the rates, there
are practically no complaints in the district?—The
rates are very reasonable.

35028. And satisfactory?—And satisfactory.

35029. To the traders?—Yes, sir.

35030. I see the rates which you give there are very
low?—Very low, both for goods and passengers.

35031. Mr. Awerch.—Under a half-penny?—Yes.

35032. I think it is the lowest in Ireland?—The
sand works cost about a half-penny per ton per mile,
and that includes terminals.

35033. Mr. Stenton.—That is unremunerative?—It
is, I should say, unremunerative.

35034. It is done deliberately for the purpose of
development?—Yes. It is 8,000 tons per annum.

35035. Chairman.—What is the train service?—
Four trains each way per day in the summer.

35036. And in the winter?—Two in the winter and
three on Friday, the Clonsilla market day; and
three on Saturday. That is an extra market train
to Brandon market on Saturday. There are two mar-
ket towns having markets on different days, and an
additional train is given to each.

35037. I suppose the ordinary passenger fares are
about the same as on the other lines?—The ordinary
passenger fares are a penny a mile, with a penny
and two-thirds for first.

35038. What are the gross receipts of the line?—
At the opening, they were £1,946 per annum, and
we have pushed them up to £1,789 for 1896.

35039. And the expenses?—The expenses very
considerably, you will see. The highest amount was
when they were providing additional rolling stock in
1895. The expenses were £3,392 per annum. That has
been the highest year for expenses. In 1896 they
were the lowest. That was £2,150.

35040. Now, with regard to the general charges, I
see they amount to about £450 per annum?—That is
the establishment charges, general charges.

35041. But they all seem to be very small?—They
are all very small, very economically worked; and
you see what a large percentage they have to the
wheel.

35042. Yes; it must be so on a line like that?—
That is the great difficulty. I think you will find
that that line is one of the most economically worked
in Ireland.

35043. Mr. Stenton.—The salaries certainly are not
high?—No, sir.

35044. *Chairman*.—I suppose, of course, the initial difficulty was the burden of the five per cent. ?—The five per cent. is the initial difficulty, and the amount of money we have had to spend on providing rolling stock. We expended from the revenue 55,524 in providing new rolling stock.

35045. Well, now, was the line originally constructed in an efficient manner ?—No, I should say not.

35046. When it was first opened, was it all in good condition, a well-constructed railway, was it equipped with proper rolling stock ?—No; they had originally four wagons. Well, we carry 16,000 tons of goods per annum; so you know how far four six-ton wagons would go on that. And they had two engines.

35047. Two passenger carriages ?—Two passenger carriages, and two toy engines—I cannot call them anything else. One of them was a second-hand one, named the *Slaney*. The contractor was constructing some works near Kinnaskeilly, and he named it the *Slaney*, and he handed it over to the Company; and they had to start immediately to provide sixteen motor wagons and another engine, a heavier engine.

35048. And, practically, that has to be paid for out of revenue ?—Yes, all that was paid for out of revenue.

35049. Because we have no capital powers available ?—No, we have no capital powers. The capital, you see, is £25,000.

35050. And that is providing the district for all time ?—Yes, sir.

35051. The baronies ?—Yes.

35052. What was the amount the baronies have had to contribute to this little railway ?—Since the opening of the line we have contributed 235,000 odd.

35053. The ratepayers ?—In sixteen years the ratepayers have contributed 235,000 odd. That is in excess of the entire capital.

35054. *Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.*—There is a Treasury contribution ?—The Treasury grant is deducted from that. That is exclusive of the Treasury grant. The Treasury have granted us £11,000.

35055. *Chairman*.—Now, has any application been made to the authorities for assistance in putting the line in proper order ?—This is the only application of the kind, sir, that we have to submit to you now. The line had been originally surveyed to Timoleague, six miles. It was then continued to Courtmacsherry along the road, and the road follows a serpentine course round the sea, and this course was strictly followed by running up a small retaining wall, and the result is that we have twenty-four curves altogether, and a great many of them are three-chain curves.

35056. That, of course, seriously limits your speed ?—Twelve miles an hour is the very outside speed, and I consider it very dangerous with a large train of ten or twelve passenger coaches (we borrow them from the Bandon railway), and an engine or two engines working round these curves with, say, 800 passengers at a speed of twelve miles an hour. I consider it rather dangerous. Happily, we have had no accidents, but it is worked with the greatest care, and we are now seeking a grant to straighten these curves. There are several of them reverse curves and by a very little expenditure in straightening them out we could get, of course, a very fair railway at a very moderate cost, as you see. The rails also are 50 lb. rails, 30 lbs. to the linear yard. Of course we cannot help that now, but it is exceedingly light for the purpose of heavy rolling stock.

35057. *Mr. Dippenell*.—What is the spacing of the sleepers ?—Thirteen to the rail, a 22-foot rail.

35058. *Mr. Ascroft*.—Thirteen to 22 feet ?—No; it is not that, but the engineer will tell you exactly.

35059. *Chairman*.—What I gather is that you consider that this is a case eminently fitted for the Treasury to make an advance to this company, so as to straighten the curves and make it more safe and easier to work, and to work better in the interests of the district ?—Yes, sir.

35060. The amount of time occupied in that short journey seems to be very long, but it is explained by these sharp curves ?—Yes, sir.

35061. And the absolute necessity of not running more than twelve miles an hour ?—Yes, sir.

35062. *Mr. Ascroft*.—But that is only for two and three quarter miles.

35063. *Chairman*.—How many curves do you say there are there ?—Twenty-four.

35064. That is all in this little bit ?—Three and a half miles.

35065. And beyond Timoleague you could make the line reasonably straight, the 50 lb. rails reasonably straight ?—Fairly straight.

35066. *Sir Herbert Jekyll*.—Has it ever been suggested that the Bandon Company should take over this little line ?—It has, sir. When the Grand Jury were going out of power I think they offered to make some arrangement with the Bandon Company, but the defects in the working expenses were then so great that the Bandon Company could not take it as a gift.

35067. It was a question of terms ?—It was a question of terms. Of course the real solution of the difficulty would be for the Bandon Company to take it over.

35068. *Chairman*.—By arrangement ?—Yes, by some arrangement.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.

35069. I think you mentioned in the figures you have given that the rates for mineral traffic are exceedingly low, a half-penny a mile ?—That is for sand. Coal works out at a little over a penny.

35070. Looking over the returns, I find your sand traffic amounts to 5,000 tons ?—Yes.

35071. And I see the total mineral traffic of the line last year was 11,800 tons ?—Yes.

35072. So that practically the sand is three-fourths of the traffic ?—Yes.

35073. And I see the total receipts from that source were only £143. That, of course, speaks for itself. They must be very low rates ?—Very low rates, sir. The average rate per ton for all traffic carried was only 1s. 1d. for the nine miles.

35074. *Chairman*.—The average receipts per ton for all goods carried amounted to only 1s. 1d. for the nine miles ?—Yes.

35075. Including terminals ?—Including terminals.

35076. That is very low ?—Very low. Our average rates per passenger were about 4d.

35077. *Mr. Ascroft*.—How much goods ?—The total goods traffic about 5,000 tons.

35078. Leaving out minerals ?—Yes.

35079. What does that pay ?

35080. *Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.*—£681 ?—£1,170 tons of general goods.

35081. The amount is £680.

35082. *Mr. Ascroft*.—About 2s. 4d. a ton ?—Our cost of working per mile per week is 24 1/2s.

35083. *Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.*—That line is under the control of a committee of management of the County Council ?—Yes, sir.

35084. But they are prepared, I gather, in the interests of the development of the country, in the interests of agriculturists generally to accept that levy and to bear that burden even though they could considerably reduce it if they raised the rates, they are prepared to tax themselves for the good of the community ?—They are.

35085. And that is a very praiseworthy spirit ?—We have even out of our small resources spent £250 on putting up a wagon weigh-bridge during the past three months. We get all this mineral traffic by the wagon as it comes out of the ships, and we are hoping to develop it still more.

35086. I think that is a praiseworthy spirit, worthy of imitation in other parts of the country. Have you made any representation with regard to getting any assistance from the Treasury, in pointing out the very low rates charged by your line in the interests generally of the country, and trying to make the best case you can on that ground ?—No; this is the first application we have made to any person.

35087. And negotiations have never been entered into with the Cork and Bandon, to take it over on such terms as would relieve the district from any guarantee ?—No, sir. The Grand Jury offered it to them when they were going out of office.

35088. The Grand Jury offered it to them ?—Yes.

35089. To the Cork and Bandon ?—To the Cork and Bandon, and they declined it, and the matter has been left in abeyance since.

35090. And nothing has been done on behalf of the County Council since they were placed in charge of the local administration ?—Nothing.

Examined by Mr. Ascroft.

35091. Are there any bridges on this line of railway of yours ?—One only, sir, and it is of no importance.

Mar. 11, 1907.

Mr. W. C. E. Cox, General Manager, Bandon, Timoleague, and Courtmacsherry Railway.

Question of keeping the railway open to the Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Company.

The rates for mineral traffic low and unremunerative.

Line worked by a committee of management appointed by the County Council.

The policy of the management to charge low rates in the interests of the agriculturists.

No previous representation to Treasury.

The railway offered to the Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Company by the Grand Jury, not refused.

Nov 11, 1905.

Mr. W. C. B. Cus, General Manager, Dublin, Cork, and Connaught Railway.

The sleepers on the Cork and Brandon line are of the same quality as the sleepers on the Turologue line. The sleepers on the Cork and Brandon line are of the same quality as the sleepers on the Turologue line.

35002 And is there any difficulty then in the whole of the Cork and Brandon rolling stock running over it?—The sleepers on the Cork and Brandon line are of the same quality as the sleepers on the Turologue line. The sleepers on the Cork and Brandon line are of the same quality as the sleepers on the Turologue line.

Examined by Mr. Acworth.

35003 Do you really suggest that any engine that the Cork and Brandon has got cannot run on a 50 lb. rail?—Oh, no; I do not suggest that. It is the curves, really.

35004 Getting rid of the curves, you do not really suggest that you want more than a 50 lb. rail to carry any engine you have got on the Cork and Brandon?—At a limited speed.

35005 What do you say is a reasonable limit?—50 miles—Twenty.

35006 I have travelled thousands of miles on a 50 lb. rail with an engine with 25 tons on the drivers and no limit of speed?—We work more safely than that.

The quality of low rates, and the maintenance of the normal gauge.

35007 There is one thing that strikes me. It is certainly fair to say that the district is not really paying all the deficiency. If they deliberately—and I am not blaming them—keep the railway rates down below the normal scale they are saving it that way?—If you raised them I doubt you would increase the earning power.

35008 Do you mean to say that the traffic would be less?—If I raised these rates I would not increase the traffic.

35009 Your own phrase was that you were carrying that sand at a non-commensurate rate?—That is a particular traffic.

35010 That is a large proportion of the whole, it is 2,000 tons?—Yes.

35011 In other words, if you lost that traffic the railway would pay better than it does, if you say it is uncommensurate?—Well, it is uncommensurate if you take it in its own special sense, but that sand we deliver at 2s. a ton in the district it is intended for, and if you raise the price of that beyond 2s. per ton you won't sell half the quantity.

The sleepers on the Cork and Brandon line are of the same quality as the sleepers on the Turologue line.

35012 I gather from your evidence that it is uncommensurate that the railway would be better off if you did not carry it?—Well, of course, we carry it with other goods.

35013 You must deal with your own sense of the word, but do you mean to say that the railway company, regarded merely as a railway undertaking, would not be better off if it did not carry the sand?—Well, it would be quite as well off.

35014 Then clearly the people in the baronies are getting back part of their loss by getting an uncommensurate railway rate?—Some of them are. A quantity of it goes outside the baronies even. The area of taxation is very restricted in regard to this line, and the area of taxation is not always adjusted in accordance with the people who derive benefit from these light railways.

35015 You do not think you could raise the rate without stopping other traffic?—I do not think I could.

35016 About the working cost £4 15s. a mile a week includes improvements?—Yes.

35017 Can you give me a rough idea of what it would be if you merely charged maintenance, would it bring it down to £3?—About £2, I should think, sir.

35018 And that is what you think you could do it at?—Yes.

35019 You say £4 a mile a week is a reasonable

sum to work a small branch?—A light railway of that description.

35020 That is what I want to get, because you have experience of it. You do work various light railways for the Cork and Brandon?—There are seven of them. They are worked by the Cork and Brandon, but they are all worked on a percentage of the receipts.

35021 But I do not much care for that on this line, for I am not on the financial side, but do you think £4 a mile a week is a reasonable figure?

35022 Chairman—The point is perfectly clear. My idea, from what I have read of your proof, is that £4 15s. is a large figure, but it is attributable to the fact of the line being so short; that though the working expenses of a line of 8 miles may be £2 15s. it does not follow that a line of 100 miles would not be worked at a cheaper rate?—It could be worked at a cheaper rate, but I will qualify that by saying that we are working extraordinarily low. I do not think you could work a light railway of, say, 50 miles at less than £3 10s. per mile per week.

35023 Mr. Acworth—That is what I wanted to get at. From your experience—and I know you have experience of those little lines down there—of course there are local circumstances as the Chairman says, but £3 10s. to £4 for mere maintenance and traffic expenses is, you think, about the minimum?—Yes, I think so.

35024 That is what I wanted to get. That line was originally worked by the shareholders?—Yes, sir.

35025 And it has now been taken over under the clause we know?—Yes.

35026 Who was the person who was responsible to see that the railways did get a proper line with a reasonable amount of rolling stock?—Well, I do not think there is anybody responsible. That is where I find fault with the system. I say that this should be looked to in the beginning. The shareholders appoint a consulting engineer, but you see the contractor provides the capital, and he keeps everything—

35027 Of course, as cheap as he can get?—In his own hand. He is the boss of the show all the time till he walks out of it.

35028 Anybody who sells a thing will sell it little as he can for the money?—Yes.

35029 And they do the same with a railway. The railways and Treasury and the money?—They do.

35030 Practically the whole of the money?—The railways, as we know, have no skilled advice?—No.

35031 The Grand Jury, as it was then, had no skilled advice?—No; they had not really any skilled advice.

35032 Was there any Government person who was responsible to the Board of Works or the Board of Trade?—No; that is where I fault it. I say the plans are deposited, but the real test was overlooked.

35033 You say that there was not enough provided in the scheme, the scheme did not provide reasonable rolling stock?—It did not.

35034 And proper advice was not, in fact, given?—That is so.

35035 And there is nobody that can be hanged for not seeing that it was given?—That is so, and I think the same abuse is on a good many light railway schemes, tramways and others.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

35036 I understand this line is not managed upon the narrow commercial principle which looks merely to the instant, or, at most, to the current half year?—Well, it is managed for the good of the district.

35037 The management regard also the development of the district as a desirable end?—Yes.

35038 I understand that if you imposed higher rates the traffic would diminish or cease in certain respects?—In certain respects.

35039 So the rates are about as good as you can obtain?—The very best.

35040 Well, do you consider that by allowing those low rates you give the district a good chance of development?—We do. In the matter of coal sales we are competing against two adjoining ports to which there is no railway communication. One is Ring, near Clonsilla, and the other is Kilnashogue, near Bandon, and we put coal both into Clonsilla and into Bandon against these two ports.

35041 There you are in a measure constrained?—Yes.

35042 By the sea competition?—Yes.

The average cost per mile per week for working light railways.

35133. But where you are not constrained in regard to inland rates, you have measured the rates upon a view of what the district can afford to pay?—We have.

35136. If you succeed in developing the district your policy will eventually come to the benefit of the railway?—It will.

35140. If you were to levy higher rates in the district now for arrangements of gravel, for instance, you would do the railway no good, whereas if you allow low rates for a time the result will be beneficial to the railway as well as to the district?—Yes.

35141. So that your policy appears to be a long-sighted policy, in which you look first to the future?—Yes, we look to the future.

35142. Now, when we look at these low rates on this railway, and at the financial results, does it not appear that if Ireland generally was to be developed the railway rates which are actually in force will have to be considerably revised?—Well, I am not prepared to give an opinion on the general policy of the Irish railways, sir.

35143. But at any rate if rates for development are to be instituted it will require some conjoint public action, which the ordinary railways cannot afford to take, having to pay dividends on their capital?—You are in a different position?—We are.

35144. You can benefit the district by low rates, but commercial railways, which have to pay dividends on their capital, could not afford to make such reductions?—Well, the Cork and Brandon carries a good portion of this traffic that I am speaking of at these rates. You know our line is only nine miles.

35145. Yes?—And that said is carried over twenty and twenty-eight miles, and the Cork and Brandon Railway Company got their proportion of that. They are carrying it at a proportionate share.

35146. Chairman.—The same proportion?—The same proportionate share; and they are a commercial company, as mentioned by Mr. Sexton.

35147. Mr. Sexton.—What do they pay?—The average is about 3.

35148. I suppose the traffic which they get from your line is a very small part of their whole traffic?—Their total traffic would be 60,000 tons per annum—rather more.

35149. And your contribution would be how much?—It would not be 35,000.

35150. You say part of this line is very dangerous now?—I do, sir.

35151. For reasons which have operated ever since the line was constructed?—Yes.

35152. Numerous sharp curves, with a sea wall adjoining?—Yes.

35153. And how was it that this line was passed by the Board of Trade?—It is quite safe, worked at a low rate of speed.

35154. It can hardly be quite safe and very dangerous at the same time?—It has worked for sixteen years without an accident, and that proves that it is safe; and it is also dangerous.

35155. Yes, but danger comes generally in a moment when some rule is broken, and if an increase of speed would cause a disaster there that is a dangerous line?—Yes.

35156. And was it considered safe by the Board of Trade?—Yes.

35157. Chairman.—Did the Board of Trade limit the speed?—Yes, limited it. I was with General Hutchinson at the opening of the line.

35158. Mr. Sexton.—If you always did what you were directed to do the line is safe?—Yes.

35159. It has a qualified certificate of safety?—Yes.

35160. Then, as to this top-shop equipment the big engine, second-hand, and the two carriages, was

that a proper equipment for any line?—No, decidedly not.

35161. And how do you account for a public authority, which has to look after the public safety, passing a line so constructed with such an equipment?—I say it is none of their business.

35161a. Chairman.—The Board of Trade has no business with that.

35162. Mr. Sexton.—A railway cannot be carried on without the certificate of the Board of Trade. Has nobody anything to do with the rolling stock and the second-hand toy engine?—You can take one or two carriages with safety with it.

35163. The safety appears to be very qualified. And the second-hand toy engine operating along a series of twenty-four curves in three miles and six hallocks, three-chain curves, so that a safe thing too?—At a reasonable rate of twelve miles an hour it is. The lighter the engine and the smaller she is the safer she is with a small wheel base.

35164. I have been considering what you said about the contractor. He thought he would like to build a line there, and accordingly he procured the necessary powers. He obtained the guarantee, and upon these he floated the capital, and then he made the line, and then he disappeared, leaving the line's liability there?—Yes.

35165. Now, regarding lines like this, which are already constructed, and also regarding the need of additional lines in the country, do you think it desirable that some public means should be instituted for the purpose of subjecting them to more public control and supervision?—I consider that no line should be built unless there was an undertaking from some parent company to work it.

35166. Do you think that there is need for a good many additional developing and branch lines and feeders, in various parts of the country?—Yes, in various parts of the country, but a great many of the lines that are mentioned as reasonable would not pay at all.

35167. No, but these are numbers of lines which might be made with great benefit to the public, and which might not pay for a considerable time. Is that what you mean?—The benefits to the public are over-estimated in a great many cases.

35168. But there are numerous lines which would give benefit to the public?—Yes, there are some.

35169. Do you think it desirable that there should be some central authority in Ireland, let us say an elective authority, which would have resources and, if necessary, power to rate, and which should be in a condition to agree with the Treasury as to the construction of existing liabilities, and to take up the construction of these lines as a national question?—I do not follow you in that, sir. I do not wish to go into the general question of the working of the railways of Ireland.

35170. I am speaking now of light railways which need to be constructed. Do you think it desirable that in districts such as yours the rate-payers and public should be protected by some public authority, if possible an Irish authority, from the operations of such contractors as you have mentioned in this case?—There should be someone to see that these were properly constructed before they are opened.

35171. And do you think that a central body responsible to Ireland would be the body most likely to deal with it efficiently?—Oh, I could not say that.

35172. But I mean as between an Imperial authority and an Irish authority?—You are on that question all through, sir, and I do not wish to give an opinion on that.

35172a. Very well, Mr. Coe.

Mr. GEORGE A. ARMSTRONG, M.E., examined by the Chairman.

35173. You are a civil engineer?—Yes, sir.

35174. And engineer of the Timoleague and Court-masherry Railway?—I am looking after it.

35175. Have you heard the evidence of Mr. Coe?—I have, sir.

35176. I think he has covered the ground that you wish to travel over, according to the proof. Do you agree with what Mr. Coe has said?—I do, I think, with most of it.

35177. Have you made any estimate of what would be the cost of putting the line into the condition that Mr. Coe has described as being required?—I have.

35178. What is the amount?—It is £25,000.

35179. Do you think that £5,000 would straighten the curves, build a new wall, and put the line into good working order?—Yes; that is not including new rails. The same rails.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. W. G. R. Coe, General Manager Timoleague and Court-masherry Railway.

The rolling stock supplied for the Court-masherry line.

The line promoted by the contractor who procured the order in council and obtained the guarantee. Improvements in this procedure suggested.

Railway extensions required in many places.

Mr. George A. Armstrong, M.E., Engineer Timoleague and Court-masherry Railway.

Estimate of the amount required to put the Court-masherry railway in good working order.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. George A. Armstrong, B.E., Engineer, Ballinacorney, Thomaspark, and Gortmasherry Railway.

Estimate of the amount required to put the Gortmasherry railway on good working order.

Sharp gradient.

Electrical communication between Gortmasherry and Ballinacorney.

The low grade cuts have resulted in increased tonnage.

Mr. Fletcher Moore, B.E., Chairman of the Dublin and Blessington Street Tramway Company.

35180. Leaving the rails as they are?—Yes. Of course there is a great difficulty when you are straightening curves, if sharp curves have been down for many years, in putting them into the straight. It is very hard to bend them. I say there is a difficulty in altering sharp curves to much flatter ones or to straight lines on account of the set they have got in the rails in so many years, and very often a good many of them are lost trying to bend them straight.

35181. At any rate, the total amount which you think is necessary to convert this dangerous line into a safely-working line is only £8,000—£8,000 for that part.

35182. You have not dealt with the question of relaying with heavier rails?—But there is another item connected with the gradient coming into the terminal station.

35183. What is that?—There is a sharp gradient of 4L, and all the loaded trains have to pull up at the gradient.

35184. Can that gradient be altered?—It can be altered.

35185. At what cost?—At £500, and make a completely flat line there. Many a time the trains have to stop there and pull up—the heavy trains.

35186. Do you take it up with another engine?—Well, we have sometimes. It would be a great advantage in the tourist traffic with very heavy trains sometimes in the summer.

35187. That is only £5,500?—That is only £5,500.

35188. Is there anything else?—Well, there is; the establishment of electric communication and the staff system between Gortmasherry and Ballinacorney. There is no electric staff system at all.

35189. What is it—staff and ticket?—There is no staff and ticket. There is only one running from either station, a single engine system; no signals.

35190. You undertake there will be only one engine worked at the same time?—Yes.

35191. Mr. Asworth?—Do you really want an electric staff for a maximum of eight trains a day?—Well, it is well to be sure, because it is only a slight cost.

35192. If somebody would find the money I could understand it, but you would not care to spend money out of your own pocket for a luxury of that kind, would you?—Not the whole of it—a portion of it only.

35193. It does not appear to you as a luxury?—To a certain extent it is.

35194. And do you think that this railway ought to be equipped with that luxury, do you think it is reasonable to ask for public money for such a purpose as that, though you would, no doubt, like to have as smart a line as you could?—I think there are so many accidents on even the best equipped lines that it is well to work the line up to-date.

35195. As a protection?—That is all. When it is left to individuals they undertake it, but if you had an electric staff it would be better.

35196. But with an electric staff a man can still run against it if he chooses?—You would have more protection.

35197. Even under present arrangements you cannot have an accident unless the engine-driver deliberately breaks a formal regulation?—No; you cannot.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON FOS.

35198. There was a question which was asked by Mr. Sexton of the last witness as to the policy of the company in promoting the development of the district, even though involving some sacrifice on the part of the ratepayers at present, in the hope that eventually the increase of traffic would recoup them. On looking over the accounts I see that

there has been, last year, a considerable increase in the traffic, this railway carrying 11,000 tons of minerals, and that you have increased your receipts, not by a large sum, but by £100, and you have reduced your working expenses, so that apparently that policy is already beginning to bear fruit. In answer to the Chairman you said that £6,000 or £7,000, in round numbers, would put your line in very much better condition. The Treasury pay at present, I think, about £700 a year in respect of the guarantee. Assuming that they are willing to capitalise that payment and redeem, as in other cases, at 33 years' purchase, that would amount to £23,000. If you take from that £23,000, £7,000 for capital expenditure in reconstructing your line, that would leave £16,000 towards paying off some portion of your £38,000 guarantee. Take £16,000 from £23,000 capital and it leaves £7,000, in respect of which, in these circumstances, the baroness would then have to pay the whole 5 per cent. Put it in that shape, 5 per cent on £19,000 is £950 a year, and with the deficit on the present or last year's working, £340, that would leave the baroness liable for £1,300 a year as against their present liability of about £1,900 a year. Is that that so?—I follow you, quite.

35199. So that in that way the baroness would be relieved to the extent of £600 a year?—Yes.

35200. Has it occurred to your mind that on the reduced capital the liability would be only £1,300 a year as against upwards of £1,900 at present?—I think that would be a very good means of doing it, and it seems to me a simple method of doing it.

35201. And you relieve the ratepayers?—It would be so much added to the ratepayers, and if they wiped the guarantee altogether it would be better.

35202. Though you cannot get everything you want in this world, still if some such scheme as that was put forward it would be very desirable?—It would.

Colonel FOS.—In reference to the evidence given by Mr. Johnston just before the rising of the Commission in Dublin you will remember that he made a statement to the effect that some allowances were given which were not in the company's rule book.

If I understand that statement correctly, and that is the evidence he intended to convey, I wish to give it the most emphatic contradiction. In the course of his remarks he made some reference to one person, a miller, being concerned. Now, we do charge lower rates for saw grain than we charge for the manufactured article, but the rates are all shown in the rule book. I do not like to refer to the question of anyone being victimised for giving evidence. The company could not entertain such an idea, and if Mr. Johnston can give any evidence in support of his statement I invite him to do so about any particular case of that kind.

Mr. Asworth.—What Mr. Johnston did was to give the names of two definite stations.

Colonel FOS.—And what are their names?

Mr. Asworth.—He mentioned Lismassack. He lives in Newtownshelton and he mentioned Lismassack.

Colonel FOS.—Two stations he mentioned?

Mr. Asworth.—Yes, and he went on to say that the man at Lismassack was a miller, someone in the milling trade.

Colonel FOS.—And I say positively that there are no rates given to either of those stations that are not in the rule book.

Mr. Sexton.—It is inconvenient to make a statement of this kind to the Commission without notice because we are unable to refer particularly at once to the matter to which you draw attention.

Colonel FOS.—I made it because it was obvious that the company should deal with the matter.

Mr. Sexton.—I only reserve the right to return to it if necessary.

Mr. FLETCHER MOORE, B.E., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

35203. Mr. Fletcher Moore, you are a Deputy Lieutenant?—Yes.

35204. And you appear before us on behalf of the Dublin and Blessington Tramway Company?—Yes.

35205. Will you give us in your own words a short history of that line?—I have been sent here to-day to give you the fullest information possible, to answer any questions you may choose to ask, and also to refute certain charges which have been made against us in regard to not properly working the line. I

may just tell you as a preliminary how it was that this line was made. In the years before 1866 there was a great desire for some means of communication with Dublin. Blessington is about eighteen miles from the heart of the city. We tried several plans. We tried to get up a railway scheme. In 1866 there was the Rathfarnham, Rathgar, and Rathcoole Railway, that was nearly going through Parliament, and money was spent on it by the inhabitants about us, but it fell through. In 1873 there was the Blessington,

Rathcoole and Ballyinglass line, and that fell through; we spent £600 in trying to get it through Parliament, but we found that we could not do it. In 1880 we started a three-foot gauge, and when that was beginning to be made the Tramways Act of 1883 was passed. Immediately we dropped the three-foot gauge, and got a Privy Council Order in 1887. The line then was finished as far as Blessington; we tried to get it to Poulaphuca, but the Privy Council only gave it us to Blessington. On 25th August, 1888, we opened the line. We have got five directors, and we have one nominal director, Mr. Guinness. I believe he lives in London, but he never comes near us, and his name was kept on merely as ornamental. We have, then, five directors; three of them are appointed by the shareholders, viz., Mr. Darley, Mr. Richardson, and myself; and we have two baronial directors, one representing Wicklow and one representing the County Dublin. County Dublin apparently is very well satisfied. They do not complain, and we have a very clever baronial director in Mr. Flood. He is chairman of the Rural District Council. He gives us a great deal of assistance, and we find him an extremely good assistance on the Board. Wicklow appointed their first baronial director, I think, in 1888 or 1890. Since that they have changed him nearly every other year, certainly every two years. I think it is their fourth baronial director now.

32256 Mr. Acworth.—The fourth since 1900?—I think it was 1900 when they first appointed one. It may have been 1898, but it was about that time. They had the power before that, but they did exercise it. Dublin did.

32257 Chairman.—What was the amount the baronies guaranteed?—£40,000—£80,000 each.

32258 Dublin and Wicklow?—Yes; not the whole county, but portions.

32259 The portion through which the line passed?—Yes.

32260 Was there any limitation as to the guarantee?—There was in Wicklow, but I believe not in Dublin.

32261 What was the limitation in Wicklow?—It is, but it has never reached that.

32262 It has never reached it?—No.

32263 But they agreed to go up to it?—Yes. I am wrong in saying it never reached it, because in, I think, the second year they did not pass it one half-year, and the three half-years coming together made it up to it.

32264 What is it now?—The latest we have in, I think, 5d.

32265 Is Wicklow?—Yes.

32266 And in Dublin?—I think in Dublin it was 3d (Colonel Hutchinson gave pointed to a document before him). I do not think it has ever gone up to 5d. It might in the first years, but not at present.

32267 Was any arrangement made with the Dublin United Tramways Company?—Never.

32268 There never was an arrangement?—No.

32269 Mr. Acworth.—It says that an arrangement was made, but that it was never acted upon?—That is about running over. There was an arrangement about running over, we have it here, and the Secretary will be able to produce it. We found that there was difficulty in running over. We had a car made by Mr. Scott Russell, of the Falcon Engineering Works, who built our engines and carriages. He made a car which he said would run over the lines. We found that it did run over the lines, but we could not run it round our curves in safety. We did not like doing it. It hopped off two or three times in running round our sharp curves.

32270 Chairman.—So that practically that agreement has never been acted upon?—We ran the car through two or three times, and then we did not find it safe, so we did not like to use it.

32271 What about the receipt of the Company?—I prefer that you should take those from our secretary; he has them better at hand than I have.

32272 I suppose that the whole of the capital has been spent on the construction and equipment?—The whole of it apparently was consumed by that. The line was done by borrowing; a great deal of everything was purchased on credit, and naturally a great deal of money was lost. If the Treasury had been able to advance us money at the beginning, or if the Fund of Works had been able to find the cash I

think the line would have been made at about half the cost.

32273 About half the actual cost?—Yes, I think so.

32274 How do you provide additional rolling stock for the requirements of the traffic?—We began with six engines that might be described as ten-kettles. They were hardly able to draw one carriage up a hill or more than about three wagons, so that we were obliged to get four new engines. These we had to buy upon the three years lease system.

32275 Of course they had to be charged to revenue?—Yes.

32276 Because you had no capital?—We had no capital, and it was the only way possible. We started with ten wagons, I think, and we found them utterly insufficient for the goods traffic.

32277 From the opening of the line down to June, 1906, what has been contributed by Dublin and Wicklow for guaranteed dividends?—Our secretary has given us the amount, but perhaps you would prefer to take it from him. It is £21,475.

32278 Out of that the Treasury has remitted how much?—They would pay half, to a certain extent. The Treasury would pay about £10,000 of it—£10,730. The Treasury only recoup 2 per cent. on the capital. If our contribution came to us much, we will say that out of £1,000 it came to £200, the Treasury would have to recoup exactly half; if the baronies paid £200 between them the Treasury would repay £400. But if we only made £100, and £300 was asked from the barons, the Treasury would still only pay £400.

32279 That is to meet the deficiency in working?—No, the Treasury pays nothing towards deficiency in working. £1,000 is guaranteed by the baronies; if the whole £1,000 is called upon, one barony would pay £500 and the other would also pay £500, but the Treasury would only recoup £200.

32280 How much money did the ordinary shareholders find for the making of the line?—£57,100.

32281 And they have never received any dividends at all?—They have not received anything at all. There was only one year—I think it was in 1893—when we had a surplus, which we attempted to carry over, but were not allowed.

32282 Mr. Acworth.—You had to pay that back to the baronies?—No. It was left there, although we did not carry it over, we wrote off something against it. It was only a small sum.

32283 Chairman.—In 1893 you had an extension of the line, had you not?—That was the last year we had.

32284 There was an extension to some other place completed in that year, was there not?—Yes; to Poulaphuca—the Waterfall of Poulaphuca, a distance of 4½ miles.

32285 That extension is now being worked as part and parcel of the Dublin and Blessington line, is it not?—In one way it is part and parcel of the Dublin and Blessington line, in another it is not. There are separate accounts on separate books, and when the engine crosses on to the new line all the guards, shunters, drivers, and everything are in the pay of the Poulaphuca line.

32286 The accounts are kept separately?—Yes, but there are through tickets and through goods traffic.

32287 And they get their proportion of it credited to them?—Yes. They get all their local traffic, and the Blessington line get theirs.

32288 Do you consider that that extension has increased the tourist traffic?—Oh, undoubtedly.

32289 And also goods traffic?—And also goods traffic.

32290 Therefore it has benefited the Dublin and Blessington line?—It has.

32291 And it has benefited the district as well?—It has, undoubtedly.

32292 Can you give us the number of passengers carried over the line for the half-year ending June, 1905?—63,794.

32293 That is for the half-year?—Yes; and 98,956 for the December half-year.

32294 That is a very large number.

32295 Mr. Scott.—It is about 500 per day on the average?—Yes.

32296 Chairman.—What do you consider has militated against the line being financially successful?—First of all the very large capital; secondly, the poor stock that we had at first (we were obliged to purchase new rolling stock, wagons, carriages, and engines out of revenue), and the running of the line.

Jan. 11, 1907.

Mr. Fletcher Moore, M.A., Chairman of the Dublin and Blessington Steam Tramway Company.

Dublin and Blessington Tramway.—Amount of guarantee contributed by the baronies of Dublin and Wicklow. Amount re-paid by the Treasury.

Capital found by the ordinary shareholders.

No dividend ever paid on the ordinary shares.

The tramway extended to Poulaphuca in 1893.

The Poulaphuca extension worked by the Blessington Company but separate accounts kept.

The extension a source of increased traffic and generally a benefit to the district.

Number of passengers carried in year 1905.

The cause for has not being financially successful.

would pay more in the second than they would in the first half-year?

The Secretary.—Of course they would. It works to the advantage of the Treasury if there are unequal surpluses.

Chairman.—It would be an improvement to the benefit of the baronies if the accounts were completed each year?

Colonel Hutchinson Peet.—That is what I want to bring out.

The Secretary.—But the Act of Parliament does not admit of that.

35272. Chairman.—You think it would be fairer to the baronies if the period were the year instead of the half year?—Decidedly.

35273. Colonel Hutchinson Peet.—You would get a larger Treasury contribution?—Yes.

The Secretary.—That would be so in other cases also, not only in that of the Dublin and Blessington line.

35274. Colonel Hutchinson Peet.—If that system had been in operation, instead of those having been a contribution of £25,000 from the Treasury, it would have been considerably more, and the baronies would have been relieved to that extent?—Undoubtedly.

35275. Therefore that is a great argument in favour of this provision of the law being amended in your interest?—It should be. It was suggested that that should be done in a Bill brought forward in 1899 by Mr. Arthur Balfour.

35276. Chairman.—Then it has been discussed before?—Yes.

35277. Colonel Hutchinson Peet.—Did the Bill not go through?—I believe it did not get through.

35278. Mr. Ascroft.—The Bill did go through, but probably that provision was dropped out of it. They did have a Bill in 1899?—It was the Railway Rates Bill in 1899.

35279. Surely the Bill for the Clifton line was 1899?—A line constructed under the Act of 1860?

35280. The Killybegs and Clifton and other lines. You say that that Bill contained a provision in the sense of which you speak?—Yes.

35281. But apparently it was struck out?—Apparently it did not go through.

35282. Chairman.—Could you give us some more information upon that point—that Mr. Balfour proposed to put a clause into that Bill to alter the six months into twelve? It is the first we have heard of it?—There is also a suggestion in Mr. Gallacher's evidence that they ought to have a larger proportion of representation from the baronies.

35283. Can you not clear up the other point first, because that is entirely new?—I mean the point that there has been some effort made at some time to alter the six months into twelve? Perhaps you will look it up?—Yes, I will look it up.

35284. Mr. Ascroft.—Is that the Bill you have there?—Yes.

35285. Will you let me look at it?—Certainly. (Bill handed to Mr. Ascroft.)

35286. Colonel Hutchinson Peet.—With regard to the directors, there is only one for Wicklow?—One for Wicklow, one for Dublin, and three for the shareholders; the other one is merely nominal.

35287. Do the three include the nominal one?—No.

35288. There are actually four?—Yes, three working, representing the shareholders.

35289. And two representing the baronies?—Yes.

35290. Do you think that that is a fair division?—I think so. The baronies are the people who have to pay.

35291. 92. You quite understand the position of the shareholders. These dividends are secure whether the line is worked efficiently or inefficiently? Is not that so?—But you must remember that there is the county surveyor of each county to look into the accounts and finally decide whether that amount should be charged against the baronies or not.

35293. Quite so, but that does not affect the point that the shareholders get their dividends whether the line is worked well or badly?—That is so.

35294. Do these directors represent some of the shareholders who contributes the balance of the capital—the unguaranteed capital?—One, I think; I do not think he has any guaranteed shareholders at all.

35295. I understand that two of the directors represent the guaranteed shareholders?—Yes. I am not sure whether the other has any guaranteed shares or not. Two represent unguaranteed shareholders.

35296. That makes it all right. It is very much to their interest that they should get some dividends?—Yes. I myself now have only unguaranteed shares, because I assigned the guaranteed shares to my daughter on her marriage.

35297. We have had a good deal of evidence as to the people who have to pay the money having but a small voice as compared with those who get their dividends whether the line pays or not. In this particular instance the directors who represent the shareholders have practically as much interest in getting dividends as the ratepayers have?—More.

35298. Do your friends compare unfavourably with those of the tramway?—We could not work at all on tramway fares.

35299. I do not think we have had any evidence as to the fares charged on the Dublin and Blessington line, can you state them?—This paper (exhibiting document) will give you parcels and goods rates.

35300. How do your passenger fares compare with the tramway fares?—To Blessington it is 2s. 3d. from Terenure.

35301. Is that first-class?—Yes, first-class, single, and 1s. 6d. third class single. We have only first and third.

35302. That is rather over a penny per mile third class?—Yes.

35303. And slightly over 2d. for first class?—It is sixteen miles for 1s. 6d., third class.

35304. 15½ miles, is it not?—15½, to be exact.

35305. You do not have much traffic in the way of goods, do you?—Yes, we have a large goods traffic—coal and coke; we have a very large goods traffic; we also have goods for Ballinacree Estate and Poulaphuca.

35306. Have you the figures of the goods traffic for the last half-year—tonnage and value?—I may say that before the tramway was made I had to pay 4s. a ton for my cartage of coal from Dublin; now I can get it up to my station for 2s. 6d. a ton.

35307. Is that the charge on the railway?—On the railway. Then there is cartage in Dublin, 1s., and, say, 6d. a ton for handling. I am only a mile off from the station.

35308. Even under those circumstances you are paying 50 per cent. less than you paid twenty years ago?—More than 50 per cent. I got a lot of food stuffs on the railway as well.

35309. Presumably, from what you have told us, a great deal of goods traffic, or a considerable amount of goods traffic, at any rate, is deburred from going on your system by the fact that it can only get as far as Terenure and then has to be taken on carts?—That increases the cost, of course, but I do not think it stops traffic yet.

35310. Naturally it increases the cost, and I think you will admit that the trader, when he finds he has to pay 5s. where he would only pay 3s. at another station does not send as much traffic as he otherwise would do?—I think he has to get it up; he cannot do without coal and so on.

35311. Is there no agricultural produce brought in from Blessington and other stations?—To go into Dublin?

35312. Yes?—Yes.

35313. That must be affected by the extra cost entailed by the transshipment?—I do not know that the trader would send more. He sends in all that he can afford. The amount of traffic going in now is greatly reduced by the reduction in tillage. We have not nearly as much tillage now as we used to have.

35314. Has that anything to do with the substitution of electricity for horse as the motor power?—No, that has not reduced the amount of stuff that would come over our line. But perhaps in one way it has. A great deal of oats used to be grown and sent into Dublin to supply the team horses before electric traction came in, by the substitution of electricity for horses there has been a great reduction in the demand for oats.

35315. Has that also affected the amount of land under cultivation, do you think?—The cultivation was going down before that. It has been going down ever since we got free trade. That ruined us.

35316. If there could be some through communication made with the Dublin tramway system, do you think that that would tend to the increasing of production and to the development of your district generally?—I could not say that until the conditions occurred. I could not say what the effect of that

Mar. 11, 1907.
—
Mr. Fletcher Moore, M.P.,
Chairman of the Dublin and Blessington Tramway Company

Passenger fares on the Dublin and Blessington Tramway

Comparison of the goods rates with the former cartage charges.

The location of the Dublin Terenure station escapes the development of goods traffic.

The distress caused by the Tramway going out of tillage

Nov. 11 1907

Mr. Fletcher
Moore, M.P.,
Chairman of the Dublin
and Blessington
Steam
Tramway
Company.

No approach
made to the
Dublin United
Tramway
Company to
take over the
Blessington
line.

The prospect
of the ordinary
expanding
for dividend.

The possibility
of an agreement
with the
Dublin United
Tramway
Company to
work the
Blessington
line.

would be. Very probably they would grow potatoes and send them into Dublin.

35317. Has any suggestion been made to the Tramway Company with a view to their taking over your line on certain terms?—No, I do not think so.

35318. Neither on your part nor on theirs?—Nothing official. I have conversed with them, and in a joke said, "We will make you a present of our line." There has been nothing more than that.

35319. Would it not be for the benefit of the district if the line were taken over by them?—It would be, but there is a clog upon it, viz., the amount of money that has to be recouped to the baroness and the Government. Until that is cleared away I do not think the Dublin United Tramway Company will take it over.

35320. I presume that the shareholders to the extent of some £17,000 unguaranteed?—£297,000.

35321. I presume that they have never had any dividends, and that there is no prospect of their getting any?—I would not say that.

35322. I understood you to say that traffic was not showing any sign of large development or increase?—Oh, we are increasing; tillage is decreasing. We are increasing in the amount of goods that we take up. Very many people now burn coal and also wheat to burn turf, especially in a wet summer like this. I expect there will be a large demand.

35323. You are paying still in respect of your guarantee something like £700 a year after all is said and done?—Yes.

35324. And you have to wipe that off before the £67,000 can get any dividend at all?—Yes.

35325. So that you have a long way to go before that capital can come into dividend rank?—We have nearly paid for our last new engine, and I do not think we will require any more engines after that; I think we have enough rolling stock; I think we could pause after that.

35326. May I take it that you anticipate that in the course of five years or so your prospects will be such that liability on behalf of the baroness will be wiped out and there will be some little prospect of the unguaranteed capital receiving dividends?—I did not say that. I said that in three years we will have a decrease in our expenses.

35327. My point is this. I understood from you that this £27,000 would be a block in the way of coming to terms with the United Tramway Company?—I do not think it would. I think we ought to have something for it.

35328. I do not see how you can expect people who, for twenty years and perhaps longer, will get nothing?—If we could make up that they would begin their dividend at once.

35329. If you wiped out the £700? I asked you if you thought you would have wiped it out in five years?—I would not like to say.

35330. Mr. Dewhurst.—Have they not to pay all the back money?—That is a point of law.

35331. Colonel Hutchinson Poy.—At any rate, it does not improve the situation?—My reading of the Act of Parliament is that they are not to recoup the baroness or the Treasury until they pay 5 per cent. on the capital as paid up.

35332. Mr. Dewhurst.—Then that is exceptional in your Act.

35333. Colonel Hutchinson Poy.—I do not think that that is the general construction?—There is a very nice point of law. If you look at the Act there is one section which says the "guaranteed" portion, while another leaves out the "guaranteed" portion and says they are to pay 5 per cent. on all the capital as paid up.

35334. Your reading may be quite right and mine quite wrong?—I should like to live to see it argued.

35335. Do you think there would be any measurable objection on the part of your company to the Tramway Company's taking you over on fair terms?—I do not think so.

35336. One does not want to molest anybody if it can be avoided?—I do not think there would be.

35337. It would be to the general interest of the public, would it not, if some agreement were come to?—I think so. That is subject to the Dublin United taking us for its wife, as it were—getting married.

Examined by Mr. SEATON

35337. You are interested as a ratepayer and also as a shareholder?—Yes.

35338. Do you contribute to the levy?—Certainly. I fancy my valuation is about £250, and I pay rates upon that.

35339. I suppose your view would be that the interests of the ratepayers should be served as well as those of the shareholders?—Certainly. Being one myself I would like to see that.

35340. The greater dissatisfaction in Wicklow than in Dublin is accounted for by the heavier poundage rate, is it not?—There is dissatisfaction on our side of Wicklow, the Blessington side, but I do not think the other side bicker their heads about it.

35341. So far as it is felt it may be due to having a heavier poundage rate to pay than Dublin?—They have a very little heavier rate; I think it is about a 1d. in the pound more.

35342. The Board of Trade return for five years gives it as an annual average of 5½d. as against 1½d. in Dublin?—I do not think that 5½d. can be taken as having been charged for a very long time.

35343. At any rate, we may take it generally that the heavier poundage rate is the cause of some dissatisfaction?—There are some people who would be dissatisfied if they had to pay a halfpenny.

35344. The people of Wicklow are naturally dissatisfied when they find that their poundage rate is much higher than that paid in Dublin?—I do not think "naturally," but they are dissatisfied. I do not think they are "naturally" dissatisfied, because they get greater benefits than the people of Dublin do. The people of Dublin are within very short driving distance.

35345. The amount of the rate is more readily appreciated perhaps, the value of this benefit?—When people are seeking to get rid of a thing they do not mind the benefit they get at all.

35346. What about your financial position—the financial position of the Poulaphuca line is much better than that of the main line, is it not?—No, I think worse.

35347. But they pay interest on their debentures?—They are paying on their debentures, but not on their ordinary capital.

35348. But they are paying out of their own funds something on their debentures?—Yes; out of their own receipts.

35349. Is it an ordinary commercial line?—Yes, but not a very financially successful line.

35350. But it does not come upon public funds in any way?—No.

35351. They pay on their own debentures. Their ordinary capital is £20,000?—I believe so, but I keep carefully away from these statistics, because we keep separate accounts.

35352. But you must not shrink statistics in these matters of finance?—I am merely stating to you that I prefer keeping away from the Poulaphuca figures, because, being Chairman of one company, I do not want to get mixed up with the other.

35353. If the Poulaphuca line could make about £1,000 a year they would be all right, would they not?—They would.

35354. As to your main line, I gather from your evidence that about two-thirds of the guaranteed dividends have had to be paid out of public funds?—Two-thirds?

35355. About two-thirds, I understand?—No. Do you mean out of the baroness's rate?

35356. Out of both—the Exchequer and the district?—Yes, it would be about two-thirds paid either by the Treasury or the baroness.

35357. By the Exchequer and the district?—Yes.

35358. And of that two-thirds the larger part has fallen upon the district?—No. It will in the bad half-year, but if my suggestion were carried out—

35359. I am speaking of what has happened?—It has.

35360. Out of the £23,000 the Treasury have paid about £10,000, and the counties £13,000?—Yes.

35361. As to future profits of the line, you have a low point, I believe?—There is a low point when it comes, and I have a strong opinion in my own mind as to what, when it comes, it will result in.

35362. It has been taken for granted, I think, in this discussion that the districts are entitled to recoupment of their contributions as soon as the receipts of the line allow?—Yes.

35363. It is obvious that if you could make in any year £2,000 the districts would for that year be free?—Yes.

35364. The districts therefore have a very urgent interest in the good management of the line?—Yes, of course.

35365. In any year and in every year in which you can make £8,000 over your working expenses the districts go free?—They will not pay.

35366. On the other hand, the ordinary shareholders have a comparatively remote interest?—Well, if my idea comes in, these shareholders would get any moneys there were over £8,000.

35367. In any year?—Yes.

35368. I think we had better proceed on the assumption that the districts are entitled to reimbursement?—It does not make any matter for the present.

35369. If you have not only to make £2,000 profit in a year, but also to repay—do we understand that the Treasury also are entitled to repayment of their contributions?—If the baronies are the Treasury is.

35370. You should repay the £2,000?—Yes.

35371. The interest of the ordinary shareholders baronies more of an abstract nature in that case?—That is on that assumption.

35372. Three directors practically represent the unguaranteed shareholders?—Yes, but still they have an interest to see that they are paid.

35373. Do you consider that these who have so urgent an interest that they would escape the levy altogether if you could make £2,000 a year are adequately represented by two directors out of five, while the other three represent an interest so comparatively remote?—The arbitrators are also there you know; the arbitrators have two by whom the shareholders are not represented, and the ratepayers are represented by two, the county surveyors.

35374. I am speaking of the executive management of the line?—But the arbitrators are over the directors in everything, and they can make any regulations or rules that they like.

35375. No doubt they can do a great deal, but they cannot practically work the line?—No, but the directors work it under their supervision.

35376. No doubt; but still the initiative of the directors controls the management of the line?—Yes.

35377. And the baronies or the ratepayers may very well believe—they may be wrong if they may be right, but it is a natural view—that if they had a larger share in the management of the line they might be able to bring about a state of affairs in which the levy would be diminished or extinguished?—That may be their natural view, but if you had had the opportunity of sitting with them you would say that they were utterly wrong; I do not think they could possibly manage it.

35378. What may be; but I submit that in these affairs it is desirable that people who have to pay should be assisted with their share in the management, even though the result might not be what they hope, the mere fact of due representation would dispose of the standing complaints?—What representation would you suggest? According to Mr. Gallaher's evidence, they ask for a larger share in the representation. There are five, and they have one; if they had a larger representation that would make them two, Dublin, which has eleven miles of line in it, ought to have two more; that would be fair. Then if the shareholders had three there would be seven.

35379. If the presence of the four succeeded in improving your profits, would it not really subserve your ends by bringing nearer the time when the ordinary shareholders would receive dividends?—There is an "if" in that.

35380. There is?—And, if I might say so, I do not think that "if" would succeed. The County Dublin has 11 miles, and County Dublin is satisfied. The baronial director is on the board, he is a clever fellow and a man of great common sense, and he is assisted. The County Dublin surveyor, Mr. Collier, is satisfied; he makes a report and says the line ought to be kept better, but there is no real large complaint, and when we have had three or four baronial directors, they have never yet, any of them, made what I call a really beneficial suggestion for any alteration in the working of the line.

35381. Would it do any harm; they might do some good possibly; they would satisfy themselves that they were having a practical share in the direction of the line, is it not a good thing to put an end to a grievance?—That depends on what the grievance is.

35382. If it is a real grievance, and it is a real grievance after all?—If I thought it was a real

grievance I would say at once that it ought to be put an end to, but I do not. I was on the Rural District Council for three years. I tried to get on the County Council to do work for them there and to carry on things, but they would not have me; they elected me on the Rural District Council instead, and I served for three years, and then I gave it up.

35383. The interest of the ratepayers in the good management of the line is immediate and urgent, and I suggest to you that it would be wise for the purpose of blunting the edge of complaints against yourselves that you should admit a larger representation of the ratepayers, even though the effect might not be all they hope for. I mean, so long as those who have a comparatively remote interest in the good management of the line control the whole direction, whilst those who have to pay from year to year have no effectual share therein, there will always be a grievance, and pardon me for saying it, a real grievance, according to the estimate of those who have to pay; it is taxation without representation?—We listen to any grievance that is brought forward. The present baronial director is the Chairman of the Rural District Council, and anything that he or any of the others brings forward we listen to with the greatest attention, and if it be of value we consider it and approve of it.

35384. But if people are merely listened to without being on the Board; that is not an adequate remedy?—We have had all sorts of suggestions from people not on the Board.

35385. I gather, however, that your mind is not closed against a modification?—Not at all. It is quite open; if I saw any reasonable ground for it, I would use my influence on the Board—I am chairman of the Board—to get any number on it if I thought it was of the slightest use.

35386. I am not sure that I understand your financial proposal with regard to the Tramways Act of 1885. You suggest that it might be possible to bring into operation some modification of the Tramways Act of 1885, which enables the Treasury to capitate its yearly liability, whilst still giving security for the payment of the dividends. These things are incompatible, are they not? If the Treasury capitate its liability the security for the dividends is gone, so far as the Treasury is concerned, is it not?—They have power in the Act.

35387. But you want a modification of the Act?—No.

35388. You say that it might be possible to bring into operation some modification of the Tramways Act of 1885?—Yes.

35389. For what purpose?—To purchase up the guaranteed shares.

35390. At what price do they stand now?—I think the last was about £13 10s.

35391. For the £20 share?—Yes.

35392. Have you gone into it because it might happen that if the Treasury redeemed their liability and paid off these shares at their actual market price the ratepayers would find no great difference?—If they did that there would be a gain certainly to the shareholders, certainly to the line.

35393. The gross liability is about £800 a year?—The Treasury liability is, say, £400.

35394. For the two counties it is £800?—£800 is what we have demanded.

35395. If they paid off that £200 at 30 years' purchase and the £10 shares were bought at £13 10s., it might happen that the sole liability of the ratepayers for the remainder would make no great difference from the present state of things?—Not if they had to pay that; but the question is, would the Treasury pay them off at their full amount.

35396. And the question also is would the shareholders insist on getting the market value of their shares?—Yes.

35397. If they did it would greatly reduce the benefit?—Yes. Something could be done in that way. But I think the better way would be if the Treasury and the baronies could be persuaded to wipe off everything, and give us to some other company to work as electrically.

35398. The baronies would want to see what consideration they were going to receive?—The consideration they would get would be freedom from liability in the future.

35399. The prospect of freedom?—Yes.

35400. You could hardly assure them of freedom?

Dec. 11, 1897.

Mr. Fleisher Moore, M.P., Chairman of the Dublin and Keshonagh Tramway Company.

The question of the modification of the present Tramways Act of 1885, and the proposed modification of the Tramways Act of 1885.

An alteration in the composition of the Board not objected to.

Suggested modification of the Tramways Act of 1885.

For the purpose of purchasing the guaranteed shares.

Proposed that the Treasury and baronies should agree on the line being transferred to some company to work, leaving the guarantee of all responsibilities.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. Rathbone Moore, D.C., Chairman of the Dublin and Blessington Street Tramway Company.

The importance of a Government grant to assist the Tramways.

The importance of approaching the Treasury for money.

The capacity of an Irish authority capable of satisfactorily dealing with the serious problems of the country as a whole approved.

—These should be some company that could assure it; that would be a necessity.

35401. Is it not rather a forlorn hope, considering that the Development Grant is exhausted, for districts after districts to solicit the Chief Secretary (who has plenty of good-will, but says he has no money), and then the Treasury, who have plenty of money, but whose good-will is doubted in the matter—is it not rather a forlorn hope to look to them to do what you require?—I do not think there is the smallest use going to them.

35402. Would you like to see this question dealt with in a general way by some Irish authority with resources, to whom you might go and submit your case?—That would depend on what the authority was.

35403. Suppose it was a body responsible to public opinion, suppose it was an elected body, charged with the care of those existing lines and the provision of additional lines of this description, do you think that they would or would not be more likely to respond than the Imperial Treasury?—I think they might be more willing to respond, but the difficulty would be to get that Irish body in Ireland.

35404. Of course, an Act of Parliament could create it?—The General United County Council has not been accepted in the North.

35405. I do not speak of any particular body; I merely put the question generally, that rather than have to go to the Castle to succumb Chief Secretaries and come here to London and look for money at the Treasury, as it is not high time that there was some authority in Ireland responsible to public opinion there, with the means, and presumably the will, to deal with this question?—I would like to see if I could secure that it was the right body, but I would like to be careful. I think it is utterly useless going to the Treasury unless you have some strong persons in Ireland forcing it on.

35406. Where every district is isolated from all the others there is no active power to bring pressure to bear on the Treasury?—There is no use appealing in that way, you must get the money to amalgamate before you make any demand.

35407. I suggest that this question of lines must be systematized and dealt with as one question in which the whole Irish people have an interest, so that the districts should be relieved of these excessive levies?—I think the districts ought to be relieved, and I think there ought to be a grant made. I think there is far away too much money going out of Ireland, and I would like to see a good deal of it retained in the country.

35408. And the best way would be by sympathetic administration in the hands of some Irish authority: what do you say to that?—If I knew what the body was—

35409. Can you have a better body than one responsible to the opinion of the country upon these practical questions?—They might go in for cattle drives.

35410. Scarcely, not—Really, things in Ireland are not fully at the right mark to get any electric body.

35411. I do not wish to press you further than this. You have often come to London, no doubt, to ask for money for these enterprises. Are you satisfied to go or coming to London? Do you think it helpful?—No, not to ask for money, but to spend money.

35412. Do you think it is beyond our wit as Irishmen to establish in Ireland some body that will deal with the matter more satisfactorily?—I do not think it is beyond it.

35413. Then I will leave it there?—I do not think it is.

Examined by Mr. ABERNETHY.

35414. I have been looking at the Bill of 1889. It was a long Bill, making many amendments of the old law, but the whole of it was dropped except the part that empowered the Government to make advances to the particular companies named?—That is so.

35415. There are a good many alterations in it with reference to existing light railways, but I do not find anything on the point to which you referred. There is this, however. In reference to new light railways not promoted by existing companies, the Treasury shall pay the promoters under their guarantee by equal half-yearly payments an annual sum equivalent

to 3 per cent. So that for new railways the proposal was 3 per cent. instead of 2 per cent., by equal half-yearly instalments instead of half-yearly by half-year according to the accounts. But that did not apply to railways in your position, if I read the Bill rightly?—It does not apply to us.

35416. But it is a suggestion which you think ought to be followed?—Yes, and in that, I think, there was a suggestion that the Treasury and the baronies ought to be represented equally by a number up to half of the whole board.

35417. There were a lot of amendments suggested?

—Yes. That was the idea of the Bill. If that were adopted, and we had five, you are the Treasury would have two, each barony would have one, and we would have only one.

35418. You would have four, would you not, if they had half and half?—We would have to get four more.

35419. That is what I mean?—Yes.

35420. You would have to have four, and I do not know who would decide between four and four?—Yes.

35421. But we need not go into that. We were told—I think it was the effect of the evidence of the surveyor of the Wicklow County—anyway, some people thought that the Poulaphuca company were making an extra good bargain?—That is not so.

35422. You represent the Blessington Company, and you say that the bargain is a fair one for both sides?—It is a fair one to both sides, if anything a little bit in favour of the Blessington line, I think.

35423. Especially having regard to the fact that they came in to help you, that is what it comes to?—They came in, thinking that they would be a financial success themselves.

35424. No doubt, but their coming helped you a great deal?—It has helped us enormously.

35425. They are paying an interest on their capital except on the adventures, are they?—We made a tentative arrangement with the Poulaphuca line when we were separate; the arbitrators looked into that, and were not satisfied. The arbitrators were Sir John Ball Green, Mr. Seely, of the Board of Works.

35426. By whom was Sir John Ball Green appointed?—He was appointed by the Valuation Office; he was appointed by the Government for the Valuation Office.

35427. And another arbitrator was appointed by the Board of Works?—Yes.

35428. And they both approved?—And the County Surveyor for Dublin, Mr. Collier, and the County Surveyor for Wicklow, at that time, Mr. Draper, they all approved of the agreement.

35429. These four people approved of the agreement under which you are now working?—Under which we are now working. That, I think, rules out any statement that has been made that we gave as fair reference.

35430. I want to get one fact which I do not think has yet been brought out. You mentioned that there are £57,000 non-terminial guaranteed shares?—Yes.

35431. Was that subscribed in sovereigns?—No. It was subscribed, some portion in sovereigns, others were handed over to the locomotive makers and the engineer, and rails and things of that kind went paid for.

35432. But as far as investors invested in it, they paid £1 for £1 shares?—Yes.

35433. As I understand, the position is this: there is £100,000 worth of capital, £40,000 guaranteed and £60,000 unguaranteed, roughly?—Yes.

35434. The £60,000 has these votes and the £40,000 two votes on the board?—No. The shareholders have three.

35435. The non-guaranteed shareholders have three?—Yes, taking it that I am one.

35436. I should say, representatives of the guarantee money, not representatives of the guaranteed shareholders, representatives of the people who find their interest?—Yes.

35437. The £60,000 have two votes, and the £40,000 three?—No. The £40,000 have no votes at all. I had guaranteed shares and ordinary shares, but I assigned the guaranteed shares over to my daughter when she was getting married, so that I hold now nothing but ordinary.

35438. The £40,000 of capital which is guaranteed

The suggestion that the accounts of light railways should be partly funded of half-yearly.

The Railway Act of 1889.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. H. O. Todd,
Secretary of the Dublin
and Blessington
and Poulaphuca
Tramways.

The through
goods traffic of the Poulaphuca line is a source of profit to the Blessington Tramway.

The division of receipts between the companies.

The agreement of 1897, under which the Dublin and Blessington Company work the Poulaphuca line.

It has been a very great benefit, especially in regard to goods traffic. In any calculations I make I always leave out the passenger traffic, for the reason that before the extension of the line to Poulaphuca, a considerable number of people went to Blessington and took outside cars from there to Poulaphuca; therefore it is very difficult to say how many would go on now if the line was not there. But the goods—coal, mineral, and parcels—traffic is absolutely new; we never had anything of that before, except during a very short period—during a strike on the Great Southern line, for a couple of weeks. I consider that there is a benefit to the Blessington line from the goods traffic, after paying all expenses, of about £500 a year.

35484. The Company has no rolling stock of its own?—No rolling stock.

35485. What division of receipts is made between this Company and the Blessington Company?—That as a matter which has been before the arbitrators and approved by them. It is not made on the mileage principle, but it is on the principle that the Blessington Company originally agreed to take 75 per cent. of their then existing fares, and when the through rate was arranged it just worked out to one-third to the Poulaphuca Company and two-thirds to the Dublin and Blessington line.

35486. What does the cost of working the line amount to, under the agreement of 1897?—The arrangement of that agreement is that the Blessington and Poulaphuca Company should pay a proportion fixed by the arbitrators of the fuel, oil, water, and repair of rolling stock. Each company bears all the local expenses, which can be divided—for instance, permanent way, each pays its own milneson and office expenses. Other things cannot possibly be divided. In the same way in making this arrangement the arbitrators took into account the fact that the Dublin and Blessington line was an exceedingly hilly line, with very sharp curves, while, on the other hand the Poulaphuca line is practically a level line. Therefore, they made an allowance of a certain proportion of mileage to be added to the Blessington Company in the calculation in order to level the two lines. That is worked out according to the number of miles run over the lines every year. The Dublin and Blessington proportion for these particular unworkable items amounts to about 6d. a mile, therefore, the Poulaphuca proportion will work out at about 4d. a mile on that principle, and they are charged accordingly.

35487. That is under the agreement entered into in 1897?—Yes. I may mention in regard to that that one of the arbitrators, Sir John Baran, is a skilled engineer himself, and took the plans and sections of the line and analysed them, so as to compare the levels and gradients of both lines before he approved of the agreement.

35488. Has there ever been a dividend on the ordinary shares?—Never.

35489a. What is now paid on the mortgage debentures?—The debentures are now receiving only 3 per cent., and even that is a year and a half in arrears.

35490. What does the Poulaphuca line suffer from now? does it suffer in the same way as the Dublin and Blessington line?—Practically from the same causes—non-connection with the city, working by steam, and of course it has to pay its proportion of the high cost of fuel and repairs, the Blessington Company not having any fully-equipped repairing shops, and the fact that people are so accustomed to electrical traction to Howth and Dalkey that they will not go where steam is used.

35491. Have you any suggestions to make?—The only thing we could suggest would be if the two companies could be amalgamated in any way and worked by electric traction. There is one matter I might mention, though it is only an idea of my own, with regard to what the Chairman said as to the redemption of the Treasury contribution. If that Treasury contribution could be redeemed, it would be something about £30,000 I think. If that could be invested in

any way in the names of the companies and harness the interest on it might go towards the credit of revenue; that is if there was a new capital created— if we could raise the capital for the electrification of the line.

35491. But no proposals of that kind have been made or have taken practical form?—No. I have had conversations with some of the United Tramway people, but absolutely informal.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

35492. You are Manager of the Blessington Company as well as the Poulaphuca Company?—I am Secretary of both Companies.

35493. As I understood your statement, the Poulaphuca people found their money on the faith of an agreement that could not be carried out—we need not trouble about the legal reason?—That is so.

35494. How was that £25,000 found?—It was found by the contractor.

35495. It was found by the contractor?—Yes.

35496. Not by the public investor?—No.

35497. And the shares have never been sold?—Not very many.

35498. They are in the contractor's hands still. At 7d a mile, could you tell me what the profits would have been, roughly?—No; I am afraid I have not got that.

35499. Can you not make a shot at it?—If it had been worked out at 7d. a mile in, say, four years, the Poulaphuca company would have benefited by about £600; that is all.

35500. The difference of 6d. a mile only means £900 per annum?—You understand the 7d. a mile was to include everything, except possibly past office expenses, but of course now, under the new arrangement, they have to pay a great deal more; they have to pay a proportion of the Blessington expenses whether they rise or fall, and it would have amounted to, roughly, I understand, £200 a year difference.

35501. The difference would be £200 a year?—Yes.

35502. Which obviously would only have been one per cent. on £20,000?—That is all.

35503. So that it could not have been a profitable thing in any case?—No, it could not.

Examined by Colonel HURMESON PEE.

35504. In fact, that £300 would only have made up the deficit divided on the debentures?—That is about all.

35505. Seeing the position in which that contractor is—he really represents the shareholders in this question—would there be any great difficulty on the part of your company in amalgamating on fair terms with the Dublin United Company, if such a thing could be brought about?—Of course, you would have to get the connecting link between the two Companies, namely the Dublin and Blessington line.

35506. Assuming the other people would agree, there would be no great difficulty on your part?—None whatever.

35507. And if the Debenture holders were protected in some way the contractor would not make any great difficulty?—No.

35508. He is in an unfortunate position, without much prospect of getting anything?—I do not know what his position is now, because he is not in this world.

35509. That would simplify matters, probably. You do not anticipate that there would be any great difficulty in coming to terms?—No.

35510. There would be no great difficulty on the part of your Company provided the other agreed?—I think not.

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FIFTY-EIGHTH PUBLIC SITTING.—TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12th, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Office, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART., Chairman; Sir HERRI JETTL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHESON FOX, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEKTON; Mr. W. M. ACWORTH; and Mr. JOHN AUDLEY FREDERICK ANFALL.

Mr. GEORGE K. SHANAHAN (Secretary)

Mr. R. G. HENNESSY, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN

Nov. 12, 1907.

35511 You are a Justice of the Peace, and Managing Director of the East Downshire Steamship Company, Limited?—I am, sir.

35512 Has your Steamship Company been running for some years?—Yes, since 1871.

35513 What is the principal traffic that you import?—Coal, timber and general building materials, cement, slate, and things of that sort.

35514 You provide a good service?—Oh, yes, sir.

35515 You do not carry passengers?—Oh, yes; we carry storage passengers.

35516 And you are registered for passengers?—Yes.

35517 What is your export trade?—Chiefly farm produce, wheat, potatoes, and so on.

35518 What English port do you run to?—Cumbrian ports—Whithaven, Maryport and Workington. Whithaven is the chief port.

35519 And what did you say your principal export traffic was?—Potatoes, grain, and live stock.

35520 Now, what port on the Irish side do you use?—Dundrum, in the County Down.

35521 Are you the port authority there?—Yes, we are.

35522 The Steamship Company?—Yes. Recently we got a lease of the port.

35523 What is the railway that serves your port?—The Belfast and County Down.

35524 Are the rates charged by this railway company and the facilities offered, so far as your Steamship Company is concerned, satisfactory?—Thoroughly so.

35525 And their co-operation has enabled you to develop a considerable trade?—It has.

35526 Does the railway company offer any facilities as to Depots at other places?—It does.

35527 What places are they?—Newcastle, Downpatrick, and Ballymahinch.

35528 And those depots you think also are a convenience to the traders in Ireland, and tend to develop your trade?—Undoubtedly.

35529 Now, are the rates to Dundrum quoted by the County Down Company fixed so as to encourage export trade?—They are.

35530 Can you just, to put on the notes, give us two or three examples?—Of rates?

35531 Yes. Take the rates. First of all, you import coal?—Yes.

35532 Can you give us the coal rates per wagon load of not less than six tons?—I can. To Newcastle, which is practically four miles distant, 1s. per ton a six-ton wagon load.

35533 Is that in the Company's wagon?—In the Railway Company's wagon. To Crossgar, thirteen miles distant, 1s. 6d. per ton.

35534 I understand that is the total rate?—Yes.

35535 That is the amount the consignee or consignee has to pay?—Yes. Then Ballymahinch, twenty miles distant, 2s. 3d. per ton. These are illustrations of the coal rates.

35536 I think that is sufficient, those three instances. By-the-by, have your Company any coal wagons?—We have twenty ten-ton wagons.

35537 And suppose your wagons are used?—Then we get a rebate of 3d. per ton.

35538 So that the charge for wagons is 2s. a ton?—Thence.

35539 And that you consider very satisfactory?—Quite so.

35540 For those short distances?—Yes.

35541 Now, as to the rates in operation, may I ask generally whether they keep the rates in the Company's rate book?—Every one of them.

35542 And you have no special arrangement as to rebates or anything of that sort?—Nothing of that sort.

35543 It is all fair and above board?—Absolutely.

35544 Then I gather from what you say that you are perfectly satisfied with the rates and arrangements of that railway, and that you are not in favour of seeing that line owned by any other company?—I am not in favour of that.

35545 You think that the independence of that railway has enabled you to make favourable arrangements which might be in jeopardy if the line was handed over to a larger company?—That is my opinion.

35546 Do you know what the rates are of other railway companies—do your rates compare favourably with them?—With any of the other lines—the Northern lines—they compare favourably.

35547 Then I take it that you are opposed to any amalgamation of the Northern lines?—Entirely.

35548 Then we may say that, on the whole, from 1871, the date when you commenced, yours has been a gradually growing trade?—Steadily growing.

35549 And you are perfectly satisfied with the present arrangements?—Perfectly satisfied.

Examined by Mr. SEKTON

35550 Is yours a large company, Mr. Hennessy?—Well, not very, compared with English ideas of largeness.

35551 We can get an absolute idea by ascertaining the amount of the capital?—I can tell you that; it is £21,700.

35552 It is a limited company?—A limited company.

35553 Is it a private company?—No, it is not.

35554 Do you hold public meetings?—We do.

35555 And publish your reports?—Publish them to the shareholders.

35556 Have you any objection to what you divided you pay?—I have no objection whatever. It is six per cent. per annum.

35557 A very fair dividend. Well, I understand from your abstract that your Company established agencies on the County Down line?—That is so.

35558 Have you established them on any other line?—One recently on the joint line of the Great Northern Railway at Carlisle.

35559 That is at the junction of the two lines?—Yes.

35560 But do you trade along the Great Northern system?—We do as far as Banbridge.

35561 But your main trade is on the County Down line?—It is.

35562 Now, can the Great Northern Company compete with the County Down line so far as the main actual course of your trade is concerned?—I do not quite understand your question.

35563 You send your goods from the port at Dundrum to certain points?—Yes.

Mr. E. G. Hennessy, J.P., Managing Director, East Downshire Steamship Company.

All the County Down Company's rates for the Steamship Company duly recorded in the public rate book.

Present arrangements with railway company regarded as satisfactory.

Capital of the Downshire Steamship Company and dividend paid.

The Company's principal trade confined practically to the County Down Company's system.

Nov. 13, 1907.

Mr. E. G.
Hewson, J.P.,
Managing
Director, East
Downshire
Company.

35564 Can the Great Northern Company, in relation to those points, compete with the County Down line, your agencies being on the County Down line?—Oh, of course, Banbridge is further distant than any of the other places I named.

35565 But I understand your agencies for your main trade are on the County Down line?—That is so.

35566 It is obvious from the physical location of these two lines that the Great Northern Company could not compete in traffic to your agencies on the County Down line, by taking the goods around on their system, except at a vastly greater mileage?—That is so.

Absence of
railway
competition
is County
Down.

35567 Therefore, as far as your Company is concerned, the County Down line is not exposed to any competition?—It is exposed to competition with various seaports along their system.

35568 By seaports but not by railway companies?—Not railway companies.

35569 Whatever system of railways prevails, whether privately owned or not, sea competition will remain and have its effect. Then any advantage you have has not been derived from competition?—In a sense, they have, because they are competing with sea-borne coal.

35570 I am speaking only of competition as between railways?—Not as between railways.

35571 The point I wish to define is this, that any competition which does exist is competition which would equally exist under any conceivable system of railways?—I think it is all the more creditable to the County Down Company that we get the rates we have irrespective of competition.

The County
Down Com-
pany's rates
reasonable
and deemed
to develop
traffic.

35572 But one of your reasons for deeming a continuance of things as they are is that if you changed them you would lose the advantage of competition. I point out to you that the competition that exists would remain in the event of a change of the railway system, that is the sea competition?—Yes.

35573 Therefore, whatever concessions the County Down Company have made to you have been due to competition or their voluntary desire to develop trade, and not to any constraint upon them?—That is it.

35574 Even with regard to the position of your traffic that comes into Belfast, I understand you to say that you import timber from Quebec into Belfast, and that it is carried by the County Down Railway to your port of Bannbrin?—Yes.

35575 And that you can do that as cheaply as if you brought the timber direct by sea from Quebec to Bannbrin?—Yes.

35576 You find it as cheap?—Yes.

35577 That seems to prove that the rates of the County Down Company are very favourable to you?—They are favourable to all traders as well as to us.

35578 In that trade?—In any trade.

35579 Your evidence is as regards this particular trade?—Yes.

35580 Are there traders competing with you in this particular trade on that line?—There are, in every one of the towns on the line.

Least that
on any of
the other
Northern
lines.

35581 Now, I think you said that the rates of the County Down line are lower, so far as you know, than the rates on any other of the Northern lines?—I say so.

35582 Lower even than the rates of the Midland Company, coming from England?—I cannot speak of that, but I am speaking of comparing with the Great Northern.

35583 I should think that a gentleman of your capacity, engaged so many years in trade, would have a good general idea?—Well, we have no immediate dealings with the Midland Railway, so that I cannot say.

35584 But probably you have some knowledge of them. Can you say whether they are higher?—I cannot say.

35585 But you say the Great Northern rates are higher?—Yes.

35586 Substantially higher?—They are.

35587 Do you find a material difference in your operations about Banbridge, so far as profit is concerned, as compared with the County Down line?—Yes; there are higher rates.

35588 And you have lower profits?—Yes.

35589 So that if you had to deal wholly with the Great Northern Company instead of the County Down Railway, your air per cent. would be probably cut in half or worse?—I do not go that far.

35590 How far do you go, Mr. Hewson?—I do not go any further.

35591 But let me put it to you, if you had to conduct your whole trade, subject to the railway rates of the Great Northern, which you say are substantially higher than those of the County Down, would not the effect be necessarily a great restriction of your profit?—I am not clear about that.

35592 Why not?—Well, they have not a goods rate and I don't say that it might not have a slight effect on us.

35593 Well, you would either have to sell at a higher price, or be content with a lesser profit?—Well we would have that alternative.

35594 Is not that an embarrassing alternative?—It may be.

35595 Surely it cannot be otherwise than embarrassing. If you had to sell at a higher price, your trade would become more restricted?—If we sold at a higher price we could get the same profit.

35596 But still it is more difficult to get a higher price than a lower?—It is, undoubtedly.

35597 Now, I can understand your contentment with the County Down system. Some witnesses have told us that they thought it would be very desirable that these smaller lines, among which I suppose they would place the County Down system, ought to be absorbed in and swallowed up by the larger systems. I understand that you would be entirely opposed to that?—I am, entirely.

35598 Suppose, as some witnesses have suggested, that the Great Northern was allowed to appropriate all the lines which touch it (except, I believe, the English-owned line, as regards which an exemption is declared), what do you think would be the effect of that on you?—The rates would go up undoubtedly.

35599 And probably your trade, which has gone up (I don't know what it was in your first year, something small, I understand), which has gone up to £1,700 in the last year, perhaps that trade might begin to go back again?—It would increase if the rates were put up, if we could hold the trade, I think.

35600 If you could?—Yes.

35601 But there are other traders competing on the Great Northern system, who would be more conveniently situated than you are for trade upon that system?—Yes.

35602 And, so don't you would find it difficult, by reason of the long mileage freight, to compete with them in price?—As a matter of fact, since they opened Castlewellan, and have extended the business to Banbridge, our freights have increased.

35603 You have increased your freights somewhat?—Yes.

35604 But if you had to conduct your whole trade or a system which had absorbed the County Down, namely, the Great Northern, would that tend to the development of your trade or to the restriction of it?—I don't think it would affect it very much. It would increase the annual sum that we pay away in freight. That is the only effect that I can see it would have.

35605 If you increase the annual sum you pay away in freight, you must increase the price you have to charge?—Well, that is an alternative, of course.

35606 The lower the price at which you can sell, the better the chance of development?—Undoubtedly.

35607 And if you increase the freights and increase the price, your trade tends to go down?—If we keep the trade, we have to pay more money for it, our annual payment must increase.

35608 Would it not be more difficult to hold the trade you have if the County Down line were absorbed by the Great Northern than under the present conditions?—I do not think it.

35609 What is, then, your objection to absorption?—We want to be as we are.

35610 What damage would you suffer then?—We would certainly suffer from want of competition the convenience of which we have now.

35611 I understand from you that there is no competition between the railways?—There is competition between the Great Northern and the County Down for the general interest of the community.

35612. I thought with regard to the freight of your company, the main bulk of it went to the County Down?—No, not at present.

35613. At any rate, the low freights have enabled you to sell at prices which have added to the development of your trade?—Yes.

35614. And conversely, I infer, or I submit to you, that if this line were absorbed by the Great Northern, and you had to pay higher freights, that would act adversely to your development?—That is your opinion, but it is not mine.

35615. Then what is the advantage of the low freights?—Because they gave us greater facilities for doing business.

35616. But if you can do your business equally well with higher freights?—That remains to be seen. You are putting forward suppositions, cases I am speaking of facts as they exist.

35617. But you are against absorption?—I am, distinctly.

35618. And you appear to be inclined to depart from your own view?—No, I am not.

35619. You say that it is an advantage to you to have low freights?—I say so still.

35620. And to these you attribute the development of your trade?—Yes.

35621. And I say if that line were absorbed, and the higher rates of the Northern line prevailed upon that system, the development of your trade would be likely to be arrested?—I do not know that it would make any difference.

35622. Do you say that it would make no difference to your trade whether you had to pay lower or higher rates?—I do not say anything of the sort.

35623. Lower rates have developed your trade. That is according to your evidence?—Hence we want them to remain.

35624. Would not, then, higher rates tend to arrest your trade instead of developing it?—You would think so, on the fact of it.

35625. But do not you think it?—I do not know.

35626. But, surely, now—please bring your mind to bear on the subject—if low rates had caused such a measure development, in which you exist, surely higher rates would act in a contrary direction?—You would think so.

35627. But don't you think so?—I cannot say I do.

35628. It makes no difference whether the rates are low or high?—I would not say that.

35629. What difference does it make?—That I cannot say.

35630. If you cannot say, I should think it ought to be a matter of indifference to you whether or not the County Down line is absorbed?—It is not a matter of indifference.

35631. Because you think the County Down line serves your interests better?—The County Down Company serves the entire interests of the County Down thoroughly well.

35632. I am speaking of your view?—Yes.

35633. And if the independence of the County Down line serves your interests better, the absorption of that line by the Great Northern would serve your interests worse. That I understand to be the main point in your evidence?—Yes.

35634. If the rates of railways generally in Ireland were such as those charged by the County Down Company, what effect would that have, in your judgment, on the development of trade in the country?—I think it should help it.

35635. Help the exports and help the inland trade?—Yes. I would say so.

35636. Help the export and help inland trade?—Yes; I think so. The cheaper the locomotion, the cheaper the freight is. I say it is for the benefit of the traders of the country.

35637. Do you think it would make a very material change in the state of Ireland, in the amount of her trade, export trade and inland trade, if the railways generally gave Irish traders such terms as you move from the County Down Company?—I am not in a position to answer that question.

35638. But you are in a position to say that the commoners extended to you by the County Down Company have greatly developed your trade?—Yes.

35639. Would not similar treatment if given by other companies throughout Ireland have a similar effect upon other traders?—I would think so.

35640. Do you see any reasonableness whatever in the idea of allowing an octopus like the Great Northern Railway, which has already swallowed up ten or eleven lines, to appropriate, completely, a line like the County Down?—I am against it.

35641. I think you will admit that the case of your Company in relation to the County Down line is a much narrower case than the case of the traders of Ireland in general with regard to the Irish railways?—Undoubtedly, we are only an item.

35642. And it is not because your Company has advanced to an annual freight of £1,700 and a dividend of 6 per cent, that "everything is," as Dr. Pangloss says, "for the best in this best of all possible worlds"?—So far as the North is concerned, I think the railways are doing well enough for the community.

35643. The County Down line?—And the other railways as well.

35644. But the others are changing more?—It is for the traders to get the rates lowered if they can.

35645. Would it not be better for them if they could get them lowered?—Yes.

35646. And would it not be better for all Ireland if by any system such terms as are given to you by the County Down line were secured for the traders of Ireland of large?—I think so.

Examined by Mr. A. WORTH.

35647. You say that any rebates or other allowances given by the County Down Company to your Company are all in the rate-book?—That is so.

35648. I do not know whether you know that there has been a great deal of talk here about rates not in the rate books of railway companies. I dare say you have seen that in the reports?—I have seen that in evidence of witnesses that I have read.

35649. As far as you know, does anything of the sort exist in connection with the County Down Railway?—Nothing whatever.

35650. You can hardly know that it does not exist, but as far as you know it does not?—As far as I know, it does not.

35651. You do not think it exists?—I do not.

35652. You do not believe it exists anywhere on the Company's line?—I do not.

35653. Now, just one other point. You told my friend, Mr. Seaton, very emphatically that you were not in favour of the Great Northern octopus spreading any further. You do not want it in the County Down?—I do not.

35654. What would be your view of a still bigger octopus spreading all over the country—having an State system?—I think it would be entirely against the interests of the trading community.

35655. On what do you base that opinion mainly?—Well, the benefit of competition between the companies would become practically unobtainable.

35656. When you say competition, it is evident if you look at the map that the great bulk of the County Down has only one railway?—That is all. I think that competition generally would cease to exist, because there would be fixed rates for all traders and you would have no chance of ameliorating your position whatever as a trader.

35657. Has not Castledillon two railways?—It has.

35658. But practically no other place out of that?—That is so, sir.

35659. But if trade goes, for example, to Larne, the County Down gets no share of it?—None.

35660. If trade goes to Dundrum, so the east, won't a great portion of it come to the County Down?—It would.

35661. So that the County Down is interested in drawing the trade to itself there?—Yes. I admit that the railways have to live by their earnings.

35662. And you know the Northern Counties have an interest in getting trade to Larne?—Yes.

Nov. 12 1897.

Mr. E. G.

Hessary, Esq.,
Managing Director, Great
Northern
Steamship
Company.

The
consent
of the
County
Down
Railway
as an
independent
system urged.

All the
County Down
Railway
Company's
rates daily
recorded in
their public
rate book.

State ownership
of the
railways
disapproved.

The necessity
of maintaining
competition
along the
railways.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Mr. E. G. Hume, J.P.,
Managing
Director, East
Downshire
Steamship
Company.

State owner-
ship incom-
patible with
railway
competition.

County Down
opinion
favorable to
a continuance
of the present
system of
railway
control.

Dundrum is
total port.

The traffic of
the railways
would be
unaffected
by higher or
lower railway
rates.

But the lower-
ing of railway
rates would
encourage the
agricultural
industries.

The volume
of traffic on
the County
Down Rail-
way is pro-
portion to the
volume
greater than
on the larger
lines.

35663. And in that way they are competing against each other?—They are.

35664. And, in your view, supposing trade came in, and say it was going to Belfast, it would not matter to a State railway undertaking whether it went through Larne or through Dundrum?—No; I do not see how the State could have any interest in that so long as rates were fixed on the same basis, whatever that might mean.

35665. Would that practically mean that you would have got rid of railway competition?—Exactly.

35666. The State would not have an interest in developing one place against another?—No.

35667. And, in other words, would not have an interest in developing any place, would not have the push of competition?—It would not.

35668. I will just ask one other question. I do not know whether you care to say, or do you know what your neighbors in the County Down think on the question?—There is a general consensus of opinion that the railways of the North are thoroughly well managed, and we think they ought to be let alone, so far as we are concerned.

35669. You represent your locality?—From our point of view.

35670. Mr. Seaton.—We have had evidence from your neighbors in Newtownards and Donaghadee?—Yes.

35671. Not in that sense.

35672. Mr. Agnew.—What is the authority in Dundrum?—Lord Downshire is the undertaker of the port.

35673. Is it an improving port?—It is, sir.

35674. What has been done to improve it?—In-creasing the depth of water and improving the facilities.

35675. What depth of water, about, has it in the spring tides?—At low water the plane is practically dry. At spring tides, thirteen feet.

35676. Dundrum is therefore a total port?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON PEE.

35677. I gather from your abstract that the bulk of your trade is in articles other than those connected with the land?—Well, the export is land produce.

35678. Potatoes?—Yes, and cattle.

35679. And I also infer from your answers to Mr. Seaton that you do not consider that high or low rates would very much affect the profits of your company?—I think not.

35680. Are you of the same opinion as regards agricultural produce, which, of course, constitutes by far the largest portion of the trade of Ireland, dairy produce and market produce, general agricultural produce—are you of the same opinion that it is a matter of indifference to traders in these articles whether the rates are high or low?—I think, of course, low rates always tend to facilitate business. Our export rates are very low. Low export rates of course must help export business.

35681. But is not the great volume of export business from Ireland under existing conditions and likely to be so for a considerable time, largely in products of the soil?—I should say it would be, sir.

35682. And though it might not perhaps affect your company, which does not deal largely in this traffic, whether rates are high or low, are not you of opinion that the weight of evidence which we have had shows that the development of the products of the soil would be very largely increased if the rates were considerably lower than they are at present?—I think that would help the trade.

35683. I am glad to have got that admission. You have spoken very emphatically as regards your own trade with the County Down Railway Company. They are happily situated in a prosperous district?—They are.

35684. And looking at the Board of Trade returns, the volume of traffic on that line is very much larger in proportion to its mileage than it is on those of the three big companies, the Great Southern, the Midland, and the Great Northern. In proportion to its mileage the traffic in both goods and passengers is very much larger on the County Down line than it is on that of any one of these three companies?—Well, I cannot speak of that.

35685. Well, you can take that from the Board of Trade returns?—Yes.

35686. And, again, in proportion to its mileage the number of train miles run by that Company is less in proportion than the number of train miles run by these three large companies?—There is a very large amount of business in the summer time.

35687. I am coming to that point. Don't you think the low rates which you say they give are very largely due to the fact that they are so happily situated, both as regards goods and passenger traffic, that they are able to run their trains economically, they are able to run fuller train-loads, and that, judging by the Board of Trade returns, they work economically as compared with any other line?—Yes, I think so.

35688. You are aware, also, that the working expenditure of the lines throughout Ireland, the same as in England has a tendency to increase, owing to the cost of labour, and of coal, and of other materials?—Yes, undoubtedly.

35689. Don't you think it is possible that if the railways were amalgamated more or less, while there might not be much gain as regards profits from lower rates, there would be considerable economies in other directions. In some matters there would, in others there would not, because the matter of personal management would be wanting in the case where the railways were run by the Government.

35690. I gather that you are opposed to State purchase, but in reference to the effect which these economies might have on the trade of Ireland, do you think it would be possible, supposing the railways of Ireland were put into one system, or fashioned into several systems, and the commercial business elements retained, and that those railways were subject to some popular control—we need not go into the question of the particular form of control—that then you would have one company, or three companies, as the case might be, anxious to develop the country, working on business principles, the same as the twenty or so different companies are at present, but able to effect economies, and at the same time to give material reductions in rates and charges?—Well, my answer is that I believe that in some respects they would effect economies, and the want of personal supervision would be against economies in other respects.

35691. I am speaking now of a system under private business control, not State control, and responsible to a public authority in Ireland. Do you see the same objection to that as there would be to State control?—I do. I say that there is no prospect there for people, very often for traders in the North, to go there and to get their grievances attended to.

35692. And you are aware that in the North of Ireland there has been considerable amalgamation. The Great Northern is the result of the amalgamation of half-a-dozen companies?—Yes.

35693. Don't you think that amalgamation would be a good thing if it tended to develop the country?—With weak lines, I think it would.

35694. Do you know anything of the South of Ireland. There are a number of weak lines in the South and West?—I do not know anything about them.

35695. Speaking generally, the effect of the amalgamation of weak lines in the North has been satisfactory?—I would think so.

35696. And judging by that experience, do you not think that the amalgamation of weak lines in the South would be equally satisfactory?—Well, naturally, it would. There is one thing I would like to mention, that I think the present arrangement by which a trader who wants an opportunity of ventilating a grievance has to get the Railway Commissioners to come to Ireland is a thing that requires amending. There is no trader can lose bringing the Railway Commissioners to Ireland to ventilate any grievance that he may have, and I think some simpler means ought to be arrived at whereby a trader would have an opportunity of ventilating any objection he might have to railway rates in a very much simpler and cheaper way than at present. Now, to illustrate what I mean, until some years ago Admiralty cases, for instance, could not be tried in Belfast; but the County Court Judge was authorized to undertake these things. He is assisted by two nautical assessors. I think if that idea was enlarged with regard to railway companies, it would be a very great help to traders in the North to ventilate their grievances, if the County Court Judge.

assisted, say, by the President of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce or the President of the Derry Chamber of Commerce, or any other town that has a Chamber of Commerce, and an assessor sent from the Board of Trade, a railway expert; if those two were sent to assist the County Court Judge in dealing with small railway questions, it would be a very great help to the traders and remove any friction or dissatisfaction that exists at present. And then, I suppose, the next question that would arise would be—Should there not be a Court of Appeal? I would suggest that there might be a power of appeal to the Railway Commission, who ought to go out once every half-year similar to assize Courts of Justice and finally dispose of the question. But the present arrangement for the Railway Commission to come over about ordinary trading business is absolutely out of the question. There is no trader would face it.

35707 Chairman.—On account of the expense?—On account of the expense.

35708 Colonel Haickes, P.C.—Don't you think that the necessity for involving the assistance of a Court to decide the question of higher or lower rates would be very largely diminished if there was an enlargement of lines?—Undoubtedly would do away with all that.

35709 It would do away with the necessity of many of those points that come before the Railway Commission, one company against the other?—No, indeed against the company.

35710 We have had very big and expensive cases heard in Dublin in the last year?—Yes, I saw them. They were very expensive to the railway companies, consequently very expensive to the shareholders. That condition would not exist.

35711 Chairman.—Do you think the grievances of traders would diminish if the railways were in the hands of some central authority responsible to the public and having full knowledge of the working of the companies?—I think as long as there are railways there will be traders' grievances against railways.

Re-examined by Mr. SHERIDAN.

35712 You say the reason why traders do not bring their grievances before the Railway Commission

is that they are deterred by the cost?—Yes, they are. They cannot afford it.

35713 I think you are inclined to complain that we Irishmen in business matters have to come too much to London?—Well, the Railway Commission comes to Ireland.

35714 But the Board of Trade?—No; I cannot speak from experience of that.

35715 I think when you want to invoke parliamentary action you have to refer to the Board of Trade in London?—Well, I have no experience of that myself.

35716 I suppose you have no experience because you would not care to come so far?—No; if the necessity arose, I would.

35717 But you have never come?—No.

35718 You have to do with a friendly railway company?—No, there has been no occasion that I know of.

35719 The railway company has been so friendly and so just that you have had no occasion?—No occasion.

35720 You think that for the purpose of securing reduction of railway rates or fares it would be well to have recourse to the County Court Judges?—Yes, I think so, assisted by some gentlemen of the description I mentioned.

35721 But what about the cost of engaging first-class lawyers?—I do not see how that could come in.

35722 When the railway company bring in leading lawyers you would want to do the same?—Not necessarily.

35723 But otherwise you would be at a great disadvantage?—I might be.

35724 So long as the railway companies engage leading counsel, the trader litigant, I presume, will always feel that if he is to make adequate provision for his case he must be similarly assisted?—That is a matter for himself, for his own opinion.

35725 He will engage leading counsel to explain his case rather than run the risk of being beaten for want of adequate skill. If the rules were regulated by a public authority in the public interest, would not that be better than to have to fight on every occasion either before the Railway Commission or a County Court Judge?—It might.

Mr. EDWARD ROYCE, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

35726 You are the Chairman of the Schull and Skibberon Tramway and Light Railway?—Yes.

35727 What is the length of this line?—14½ miles.

35728 How is the capital found for this railway?—The capital is guaranteed by the ratepayers.

35729 It is one of the guaranteed lines?—Yes.

35730 What is the amount of the guarantee?—Five per cent. on £27,000.

35731 The ratepayers do not guarantee the whole, I suppose?—Two per cent. is paid by the Government.

35732 The guarantee is in perpetuity?—Yes.

35733 I have not got the date. When was it that the districts guaranteed this line?—In 1863.

35734 The districts having guaranteed the £27,000 for this railway, was any stipulation made as to whether the rates in the pound should not exceed a certain figure?—No, sir, there was not.

35735 Was any statement made as to what the probable liability of the ratepayers would be?—The contractor, a gentleman named Mr. Avondore, came before the ratepayers in stating this line, and he said very many things about what the line would do, and all that sort of thing, and he got the ratepayers to give a guarantee at five per cent., and he took the contract afterwards for £27,000.

35736 He was the contractor?—He was everything.

35737 He was the promoter?—He was the promoter.

35738 Was any statement made by him, or his firm, giving the ratepayers an idea as to what their liability would be?—He said it would be very little, if anything, two or three pence in the pound, or something like that.

35739 The ratepayers agreed to this on the assumption that they might not be called upon for anything,

but if they were it would be only two or three pence in the pound?—That was the statement he made in the opening.

35740 That is the firm of contractors who built and equipped the line for the £27,000?—Yes.

35741 Who were the directors appointed to look after it?—There were six gentlemen appointed by the old Grand Jury.

35742 Six directors appointed by the old Grand Jury. When was the line constructed? When did they begin to construct the railway?—At the end of 1863, and it was opened for traffic in 1866; I think it would be 1824 when they commenced it.

35743 That is near enough, 1863 or 1864. You say that in the end of 1866 the line was declared open by the contractors?—Open for traffic.

35744 Now, who was supervising the construction of the railway?—Mr. Avondore had an engineer of his own.

35745 I understand the contractor did, but who supervised for the ratepayers?—The Grand Jury, in fact, the ratepayers had no say in the matter; these six gentlemen did what they liked—the six Grand Jurors, I mean, the Committee appointed by the Grand Jury after the line was working.

35746 I want to get the history shortly from you. The six gentlemen appointed by the Grand Jury were supposed to look after the construction of the railway?—Yes.

35747 And keep the contractors up to the mark?—Yes.

35748 Did they do it?—They did not. This contractor tipped the Inspector, and that sort of thing, and these gentlemen paid their visits regularly. The men did what they liked.

35749 You are the Chairman of the line now?—Yes.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Mr. H. G. Harvey, J.P., Managing Director, East Downshire Steamship Company.

The probability of diminished litigation if the railways were controlled by a public authority.

The contractor's work alleged to have been faulty; proper supervision asserted by the Committee.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. Edmund Keefe, *et al.*,
Chairmen of the Dublin and
Brimstone
Light Rail-
way.

Line owned
by Board of
Trade
Inspector

Rolling stock
supplied by
the contractor
under his
agreement

Line opened
in September,
1896.

The railway
closed for
nine months
after opening
owing to
defective
rolling stock

Disappearance
of contractor.

Improvements carried
out, additional
rolling stock
provided,
and line
re-opened.

Particulars
of defective
construction

35741. Your contention is that although they nominally supervised the line they did nothing?—They did nothing.

35742. Did the Board of Works do anything?—They sent that inspector down, and he passed the line also.

35743. The Board of Works?—Yes; the Board of Works Inspector, the Board of Trade, I think.

35744. You mean the Board of Trade Inspector passed it?—Yes.

35745. When the line was constructed, and notice was given that the line was ready to be opened for traffic, the Board of Trade sent an inspector to pass the line?—Yes, the line was only open six months—

35746. Stop a minute, we will get on by steps. Tell us, first of all, what rolling stock the contractors had to supply under their agreement?—Four locomotives and, I think, twenty-four wagons.

35747. And what was the weight of the rails that they had to lay down on the railway under the contract?—I think, 25 lbs. I do not know exactly the weight of the rails, the engineer was just telling me.

35748. Mr. Asworth.—Has he got the original specification?—No; we applied for it, but we could not get it. It appears there was a burning in Cork, and this specification was there, and it was burned.

35749. Chairman.—Now we got to the opening of the line in September, 1896?—Yes.

35750. Was the traffic worked satisfactorily after the opening?—No, the engine came off the track the third day after it was opened, and they were obliged to stop working at the end of nine months.

35751. That is a most extraordinary story; within three days after the opening of the railway, the railway had to be stopped, because the engines and carriages would not run safely on the line?—That is a fact.

35752. How long was the line closed?—Nine months, and the Committee were obliged to borrow £1,600 also to put it into working order again.

35753. Was there not an arrangement made that the contractors should keep the line in proper repair for a certain period after the opening?—No; he ran away the moment it was passed, and we have not seen him since.

35754. Mr. Asworth.—Where did he come from?—From London here, I think. He went back to Australia then, and we have heard no more about him since. He wrote a pamphlet, and said he had been benighted the Irish people, and that he was taking £25,000 over with him.

35755. Chairman.—You say they had to borrow more money?—Yes, £1,600.

35756. They had to get another engine?—They had to get another engine, and they had to get more rolling stock.

35757. They had to get that on the hire system?—Yes.

35758. Even after that, was the line in a sufficiently good condition to enable the traffic to be worked properly?—Since 1896, since the Committee of Management arranged to take it up, they have spent any amount of money on trying to improve the line and make it workable, and to keep from having any accidents there.

35759. In other words, I gather from what you say, that the line was in such a state that it really had to be re-made?—A great deal of it; the contractor put bad sleepers in it.

35760. I suppose the contract stipulated that a certain number of sleepers were to be placed on the road in certain places, and that the timber should be of a certain quality?—Yes. I think he put one sleeper in every two paces.

35761. Baltic sleepers, I suppose, were in the contract?—Yes, but he put soft native timber into it.

35762. No Baltic sleepers at all?—No.

35763. Mr. Aspinall.—Larch?—Some sort of soft larch.

35764. Chairman.—And less of those than according to the contract?—Yes.

35765. Who looked after that?—The Grand Jury had their County Surveyor.

35766. These six gentlemen?—Yes. They had their County Surveyor to look after it, and he passed it also, equally with the Board of Trade Inspector.

35767. Mr. Aspinall.—Who was the Board of Trade Inspector?—General Hutchinson.

35768. Chairman.—Did I get from you the number of vehicles that the agreement provided for?—The contractor was to supply five passenger cars and sixty other vehicles.

35769. That was the contract?—Yes.

35770. What did he supply?—Four passenger cars seating eighteen passengers, and forty-nine wagons.

35771. Did the traffic gradually increase after the second opening of the line?—Yes.

35772. Then it was found, I suppose, that you had not sufficient passenger vehicles to carry the traffic?—Sometimes we had not. We were obliged to pay £465 for new carriages in 1890.

35773. That were found to be necessary?—Yes.

35774. Your contention is that these ought to have been supplied by the contractor under the original contract?—Yes.

35775. When was it that the Grand Jury took over the working of the railway?—In July, 1892.

35776. Of course in 1893 the Local Government Act was passed, was it not?—Yes.

35777. Then it got into the hands of the County Council?—Yes.

35778. How was it worked by the County Council?—They appointed six members as a Committee of Management, they are working it now.

35779. And you are one of them?—I am one of them.

35780. You are the Chairman?—Yes.

35781. Now, from 1890, the time that the County Council Committee got it, has it still been found that further accommodation is wanted and more vehicles?—Yes, we were obliged to build a new engine recently costing £1,300; the old ones are practically of no use, and the wagons have to be removed, I believe the first ones were partly second-hand ones, they are constantly breaking down, and we have to be replacing them.

35782. Now let us come to the present time, it is a more interesting. At the present time what is your condition with regard to the rolling stock?—We have built four wagons, we are building three more, getting carpenters and carriage builders to construct them on our own premises now.

35783. Do you find that all the original rolling stock was inferior?—Every one; they are practically valueless, we are using them for all they are worth, and getting the timber work done ourselves.

35784. And that is only after twenty years' wear?—Twenty-one years.

35785. You think that if they had been in first-class condition at the beginning they ought to last considerably longer?—We have been renewing and repairing them over and over again during that time.

35786. What have the ratepayers been called upon to pay? I do not see it in your memorandum?—About sixpence in the £.

35787. Now?—Yes; and besides that, they are paying another guarantee on the Bank of Extension of £40 in the £, from Drogheda to Banty.

35788. Is the Island Valley finished?—Yes.

35789. There is no guarantee on that now?—Until recently, we had to pay the whole of the capital, and also the ratepayers in my locality are paying three guineas.

35790. Of course the original contractors laid the line out with a good many sharp curves and bad gradients?—It was like a small crop, it is just built like the shape of a small crop, just in the form of an "S"; the curves are sharper than an "S" in some cases, with sharp corners and steep gradients. The engineer will be able to explain it.

35791. We will ask the engineer?—Owing to the defective method in which it was constructed, the rolling stock will not stand half as long as it would otherwise, because there is so much wear and tear, the steam pipes burst frequently, and that sort of thing.

35792. Mr. Seaton.—Of course neither the rolling stock nor the rails can stand?—And the sleepers have to be torn up. We applied some time ago to the Government for a grant. Mr. Bryce, the late Chief Secretary, was up in Kesh, and he promised to support it. The Chief Engineer was sent out to inspect it, and he was surprised when he saw it at the way it was passed off by any Inspector, it was so defective, so badly built, and so badly constructed. We applied then

for a grant to cut off the curves and lower the gradients, and we got a letter from the Chief Secretary.

35798. Chairman.—You got a letter from the Chief Secretary, but the grant has not been given?—No.
35799. Because the time was not opportune?—If we got a grant of £10,000, the directors had no say in the matter themselves; the Government inspected and passed the line, and the poor ratepayers could not help it.

35798. Could you tell me what is the highest rate in the £ that the ratepayers have been called upon to pay?—1s 2d in the £ in 1902.

35799. And now it is what?—Now it is ninepence.
35797. You are of opinion that if a grant were made sufficient to put the line in proper working order, and the rolling stock in proper working order, and sufficient for the traffic, the curves straightened, and the gradients altered, the line could be worked so considerably cheaper that the payment by the ratepayers would be considerably reduced?—That is so.

35798. And you think, considering that the ratepayers were really helpless in the beginning with regard to the construction of this line, consideration should be given to their application?—Yes. I may tell you also that our traffic has nearly tripled from 1887 to the present time—both passenger traffic and goods traffic.

35799. But your net profits are kept down because of the constant expenditure on the line and the stock?—We have paid more on the guarantee now than it cost to construct the line altogether.

Examined by Sir HERBERT JESTIN.

35800. Have not your troubles all arisen from the six Grand Jurors allowing themselves to be imposed upon by an enterprising contractor in the first instance?—We think that if they were more vigilant things would have been better.

35801. Had they any expert advice?—They had the County Surveyor.

35802. Did the County Surveyor know anything about railways?—He was supposed to be an engineer.

35803. They had no skilled railway man to help them?—No, not except the County Surveyor.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON FOS.

35804. While the line was under construction, did not the Board of Works' engineer from time to time inspect it and satisfy himself that the works were being constructed in a proper manner?—I do not think so.

35805. He was bound to do so?—I never saw him there more than once.

35806. The Board of Works, whenever they advance money for such a purpose as this, always, apart from the undertaking, during the construction, send their Engineer down from time to time to satisfy himself that the work is conducted in a proper manner. Do you mean to say that in this particular instance he did not attend to those duties?—I have been informed since by some of the men who worked on the line that the very morning the Government Engineer came down to inspect it the contractor had a whole lot of men with their oil-cans oiling the rails to make things go smooth.

35807. I am not referring so much to the Board of Trade Inspector, but, so far as you are aware, your answer is that no supervision was exercised by the Board of Works during the construction of this line?—No.

35808. I can hardly understand it, but no doubt we shall have some explanation. I think subsequently to the closing of the line in 1887, General Hutchinson, the Board of Trade Inspector, made a Report as to the condition of the line, and the causes of the stoppage; are you aware of it?—I am not aware of the causes of the stoppage, but that was after it was passed the first time.

35809. The first time, as you are aware, the only duty of the Board of Trade Inspector is to satisfy himself that the line is in good condition for working with due regard to the safety of the public; he has nothing to say to the construction, or the rolling stock, or anything of that sort?—That is all.

35810. But subsequently he was called upon to make a special report after the line had stopped, and in

that report he called attention to the fact that the engines were practically incapable of drawing thirty tons up the hill, and they had to stop?—Yes.

35811. Even a few months after that line had been opened, he goes on to say that another new engine should be got, and the three existing ones, which had only been working a few weeks, should be put in proper repair. That is General Hutchinson's report?—Yes.

35812. Further on I think he pointed out that, owing to the steep gradients, and sharp curves that you have described, in his opinion—and I believe it was subsequently embodied in a Board of Trade Order—the speed of the trains at two of the curves ought to be limited to four miles an hour. Whether it was observed or not I do not know, but at two particular points in that line the speed, by order of the Board of Trade, was supposed to be limited to four miles an hour, and in nine other places on the line I believe the engines had to come to a standstill in order to get up sufficient speed to get over them?—Oh, very often the passengers had to get out and shove it up the hill.

35813. Chairman.—Is that fiction or fact?—I was present myself; I was a witness of it. It even appeared in some of the London papers; there were some Englishmen in Skull, and they wrote it all out after they came back—their experiences.

35814. Mr. Stenton.—What was the engine doing?—It was so weak and defective.

35815. Colonel Hutchinson Fos.—I think that General Hutchinson pointed out that some of those curves have a radius of 2½ chains, or something like that?—They are very sharp curves.

35816. I think that line was capitalised in the first instance, or promoted, at any rate, by Sir John Lubbock?—He practically owned most of the shares.

35817. That was a London Company which bought up the shares that these different light railways wanted in return for shares of their own?—Yes.

35818. And with regard to that line and others, the introduction of such a system of finance was very disadvantageous to the district?—Yes; I think so.

35819. With regard to the £27,000 of capital, can you say what proportion of that actually went to the construction of the line—was available for construction purposes?—There was not a penny; it was all spent; the Company had no capital.

35820. I am quite aware of that. My point was this, that of the £27,000 supposed to be subscribed originally a considerable percentage went to legal and promotion expenses?—I could not tell you how much; it was in the hands of the contractors; at any rate, the contractors got £27,000.

35821. From the evidence, I believe that something like 20 per cent. of that capital—that £27,000—went in legal and promotion expenses?—We could never find that out, because the six gentlemen were looking after it, and the Grand Jury; the ratepayers had not any conception of how they managed matters; they had not a single word to say in it at the time.

35822. At any rate, between the Grand Jury and the Board of Works who were responsible, the ratepayers have manifestly suffered a very great hardship?—The net loss is £25,963 in twenty-one years.
35823. That is, after taking into due account the reimbursement by the Treasury and the refund from the local taxation account?—We have also the local taxation of £5,000.

35824. Mr. Stenton.—There is also a loss on the working.

35825. Colonel Hutchinson Fos.—What is the net loss, after taking into account the large contribution from the Treasury and also the repayment on local taxation account?—The total loss was £25,963; the net loss was £55,963.

35826. And the average annual guarantee for the five years ending 1905 was nearly 1s 2d ½—1s 2d in the £.

35827. Even for the average of five years—taking the larger average—ending 1906—the average levy on the benefits in the one case was 1s 1½d, and in another case, 8½d—a very heavy burden on a comparatively poor district?—Yes.

35828. The capital of the line is divided into 63 shares, is it not?—Yes.

35829. And at present they are at a premium; the dividend was guaranteed, and the price at present is 25s 5—I think so.

See 19, 1905.
Mr. Edmund Seymour, C.R., Chairman of the Skellern Light Railway.

Skeff and Skellern Railway.

Special report by Board of Trade Inspector after the opening of the line pointing out defects in construction and equipment.

The method of financing the line considered.

The legal and promotion expenses.

Amount of the guarantee paid by the ratepayers since the opening of the railway.

Average rate for the interest paid on the five years ending 1905.

The shares at present with small premium.

* See Appendix No. 31.

Nov. 12, 1907.

Mr. Edward
Reynolds, J.P.,
Chairman of
the Dublin and
Shibbolen
Light
Railway.

Reynolds and
Shibbolen
Railway
(continued).—
Suggested
reduction of
the Treasury
guarantee to
alleviate the
burden of
relief.

The condition
of the railway
exploited to
the Irish
Government
by a depu-
tation in 1905.

Inspection of
the by the
engineers of
the Board
of Works in
1904.

Class made
for a General
meeting on
the same
grounds as in
the Irish and
Dublin case.

The engine
required to
work the
railway.

35629 That is 25 per cent. premium; so that if the Treasury would reduce their guarantee, there would be a good lot of money to go towards renewing and repairing the line—improving the line—and anything left after that would go towards the reduction of the capital, and a saving would be effected to the baronet?—Yes, I think so.

35630. You know they can redeem their liability up to the extent of paying 33 years' purchase, and when these shares stand at a comparatively low premium as compared with some of the other lines, some of which stand at 35 and 37 per cent premium, even taking into account the premium at which these shares stand, some relief would be afforded to the baronet?—It would be very much appreciated if we could get relief.

35631. I think under the Act that was read the County Surveyor is empowered from year to year to go over the line, note any case of complaint, and make any suggestions as to what should be done?—He goes twice a year.

35632. And no doubt he has made representations to the County Council?—The County Council had no objection to anything that would be done for the best, the money coming out of the district or otherwise.

35633. Quite so. It is impossible, under the circumstances, that the ratepayers should find any more money to put this line into proper working order. When you spoke of Mr. Bryon, the late Chief Secretary, promising you support, was that in consequence of any representation made to the Irish Government?—A deputation of ratepayers waited upon him and explained the matter to him.

35634. Was his letter previous to that deputation or after?—There was a Committee of Management constituted owing to the defective manner in which the line was built and worked.

35635. What I wanted to get at was, whether you are aware if any representation was made to the Board of Works with regard to the unsatisfactory working of this line?—Yes, there was; they sent down their engineers.

35636. In 1905?—In 1905.

35637. But previous to that, this line has been in the hands of the local authorities for practically seventeen years, has it not?—Yes.

35638. And working at a great loss, and incurring a very heavy levy upon the ratepayers, has no representation during all those years been made until 1905?—I have only been connected with it eight years.

35639. Was any reply sent by the Board of Works subsequently to the report of their engineers?—No.

35640. I suppose they acknowledged it?—They acknowledged the receipt of the letter, and that is all.

35641. It seems a case where I should have thought the Board of Works would have tried to make some representation to the Government?—Owing to the careful way in which the Committee of Management are trying to work the line, and paying rates, and so on, they spend a good deal of money, to prevent the same disaster occurring as occurred at Campbell, in Kerry. The Kerry people got £25,000 from the Government last year, and we think we ought to get the same.

35642. Mr. Sturges—Is this line liable to the same kind of disaster owing to sharp curves at the bottom of the gradients?—Yes, it is most dangerous. The engineer will be able to explain it better than I can. If we got half the amount that the people in Kerry got, we could make the line all right, I think.

35643. Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.—Since the line was taken over by the County Council, you have no complaint to make as to the direction or anything of that kind?—No, they are a popular elector body.

35644. The different complaints we have had as to the ratepayers not getting proper representation do not apply?—No.

Examined by Mr. Aisworth.

35645. How many engines have you?—Four.

35646. I see that the work of the line is apparently done with one engine?—Oh, no; it is not.

35647. I mean, one engine starts out in the morning from Shibbolen at 6.50, I presume it is the same engine that goes backwards and forwards, and gets back to Shibbolen at 5.30?—That would not follow, necessarily. They move take them on fair days—the cattle fairs and the pig fairs—the cattle fair would

be the day after the pig fair, and we must have second locomotives to pull them backwards and forwards.

35648. You mean you put two on one train?—We have to put two on one train.

35649. I think I am right in what I say. According to the time table, in the winter, at any rate, the ordinary train service seems to be worked by using only one engine?—That is right, we put on the best one we have.

35650. You have got four engines; you said that the line was earning three times what it did at the start?—Yes; there is three times more traffic now than in the winter.

35651. Have you got the figures for the first year?—We have.

35652. I see that it is only earning £3 10s. a mile a week now?—The Secretary will read it out.

35653. Is it really a fact that it began by only earning £3s. a mile a week?—The passenger receipts for 1886 were £4 12s. 2d.

35654. Cannot you give us the whole of the receipts for the whole year, so that we can check that figure?

35655. Mr. Sturges—It was £1,600 for the whole year, which is £3s. a week average—what is it now?—The traffic now is £2,600.

35656. That is more like double what it used to be?—Yes.

35657. Mr. Aisworth—Apparently the first year after it was properly opened it earned £1,600; the next year it was nearly £2,000, and last year I have here, which is 1907, it earned nearly £2,600?—That is right.

35658. You see that is not three times by a long way.

35659. Chairman—In 1905 it earned £2,036.

35660. Mr. Aisworth—Half as much again as it was in more like the fact.

35661. I do not think you have 1907 there.

35662. No. Give us 1906, we cannot get 1907.

Mr. Sturges—It is here, in the Board of Works Returns—1906, £1,474 for the first half of 1906.

35663. Mr. Aisworth—You see the first year it was opened it was £1,600; the next year it was just on £2,000, so that what we really may say is that it is half as big again, not three times?—The traffic has increased.

35664. I am very glad to hear it, but what surprised me was, I could not think that any line could have earned as little as a third of what it is earning now?—There was a steamer plying from Cork running to the Western ports, which was getting a subsidy from the Congested Districts Board; that has ceased to run, and since it ceased running the traffic has increased upon our line.

35665. I only want to get the facts, as I did not think they were quite straight. Are you satisfied with the service you have got now?—We would be quite satisfied if the line was improved. We have no fault to find except with the defective manner in which the line has been built, and if you could get a grant to improve the line, we should be quite satisfied.

35666. I see a man cannot leave Skull and get to Cork, until three o'clock in the afternoon?—No.

35667. Yes?—On Thursdays he can.

35668. On Thursday he can; on Thursday the Cork market day?—There is a lovely train every Thursday morning, which meets the market at Shibbolen; you can get to Cork by that train.

35669. I suppose you run three trains in the summer?—Yes.

35670. Do you think two trains a day is enough, or is it that you grudge spending money to run three?—Two. I think would meet the traffic all right.

35671. You think two is enough?—There would be a lot of tourists going out in the summer, and to facilitate them we run three trains.

35672. But for the local passenger traffic you think two is enough?—I think so. We get the mails there, but owing to the breakdown of the trains we get the mails running side by side with our trains—going empty sometimes, but we were unable to take up the mails, fearing we would not be punctual.

35673. A good horse would go just about as fast?—The weight of the mails would not encumber as much.

35674. You would like to get them, and get a little money by it?—Yes.

35872. Colonel Hutchinson Fox—That very low speed is caused by these gradients and curves?—By the gradients and curves.

35873. If those gradients and curves were lessened, we could get on at very much greater speed?—We could go, in a quarter of an hour less to Sluikheen.

35874. Mr. Assewith.—There is a Board of Trade Report, I suppose, to the speed—what is it, twelve miles an hour?—Yes, twelve miles.

35875. Colonel Hutchinson Fox.—It is twelve miles in the country and six miles in the villages. That is under the Act of 1843.

35876. Mr. Assewith.—It is all on the road?—On the side of the road.

35877. It is alongside the road all the way?—Yes, there is no partition between it and the road.

35878. And you are restricted to twelve miles an hour maximum speed?—Yes.

35879. If a motor comes alongside, it can go at twenty miles an hour—sometimes thirty, I am told.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

35880. Do you consider that as this line is the subject of both local and Treasury guarantees, the Board of Works and the Board of Trade were responsible for seeing you provided with a proper line?—That is what we think.

35881. You think that both the Board of Works and the Board of Trade signally failed in the discharge of their duties?—Yes, that is so.

35882. Do you infer from that, and ask the Commission to infer from it, that the Government has incurred a special responsibility to the ratepayers of your district?—That is our opinion.

35883. But as they failed to see a proper line provided, they are bound to see that you get a proper line now?—That is our opinion.

35884. Did you ever hear of the contractors before they constructed the line?—Never.

35885. Have you ever heard of them since?—Never. We heard that this man got killed in Australia; he wrote a book before he got there, stating that he took away £23,000.

35886. This contractor turned up in the district and persuaded the Grand Jury?—Yes.

35887. The Grand Jury gave a guarantee?—Yes.

35888. Upon the basis of that guarantee the contractors raised the capital?—Yes.

35889. Then they constructed (shall we say) this line, took the capital, and disappeared?—Yes, that is all.

35890. That is a pretty result of wise and careful Government at the end of the nineteenth century?—That is the result.

35891. The contractors took the whole capital, every penny of it?—There was not one penny left after he had disappeared.

35892. Not one penny of the £27,000 was left for any purpose of the line?—Not one penny.

35893. This contractor agreed to give you rails of 56 lbs. to the yard and gave you 46 lbs.?—Yes.

35894. He undertook to find Baltic sleepers and gave you native wood unseasoned?—Yes.

35895. He undertook to fatten them in a workmanlike manner with proper ballast?—Yes.

35896. He undertook to provide you with rolling-stock?—Yes.

35897. You have had to keep on providing rolling-stock ever since?—Yes.

35898. Turning the wagons into carriages?—Yes.

35899. You have had to build sheds?—Yes.

35900. You have had to build shops?—Yes.

35901. You have had to build even offices and a boardroom?—Yes.

35902. Have you a turntable?—We have had to buy that also.

35903. You had no turntable?—We have bought one since.

35904. The trains had to go on some occasions with the large wheels first?—Yes.

35905. Down these steep gradients, past these sharp curves?—Yes.

35906. Did the Trillick and Dingle accident arise from just such a state of things?—Yes. We have worse curves than Camphill.

35907. And the Government were shamed into providing the money for that; they felt they had to provide it?—Yes, they gave £25,500.

35908. May the same thing happen here if they persist in waiting much longer?—We have careful drivers, and they slow down, but if the brakes give way, they refuse to work.

35909. If you have an engine run large wheels first down a steep gradient with a sharp curve like that at the end of it, if the brakes give way the train would get out of control; you are always in danger?—Yes, that is a fact.

35910. I notice that in the Chief Secretary's letter from Dublin Castle to you—they always write very civil letters from Dublin Castle?—Yes.

35911. He says the Lord Justice thinks that the suspicious moment has not arrived?—Yes.

35912. Do not you think that if the Government wait much longer for the suspicious moment to arrive there may be an accident first?—It is much better that we should get it beforehand; prevention is better than cure.

35913. What is the explanation—is there any explanation possible of the action of the Board of Works, the County Surveyor, still more, the Board of Trade Inspector? Here is a line badly run, with steep gradients, sharp curves, badly laid rails, too light sleepers—not the right kind of wood, and not fastened properly—defective in every respect—we are told the Board of Trade are limited to inspecting the line for the safety of the public, but do not carry out those things which concern the safety of the public?—Certainly, every one of them.

35914. Is there any local view, theory or tradition, as to why the Board of Trade sanctioned that line?—They say the contractors gave some palm oil.

35915. If the Board of Trade were liable for an action for damages like a private trader, would they not have to pay to the last penny?—Decidedly.

35916. Why should a Government Department screen themselves behind their immunity?—Because I suppose they are independent of the ratepayers.

35917. You wrote to the Government?—Yes.

35918. That was last January, and the reply was—“The Treasury have, however, no many applications for money grants before them from the South and West of Ireland that it is feared that the application would at this moment have no chance of a favourable reception, and their Excellencies think that the Committee of Management would, in their own interests, be well advised to wait a more auspicious moment.” Has that auspicious moment yet arrived?—No.

35919. What do they mean by “a more auspicious moment”?—When there are a few persons killed—then will be the time.

35920. They collect a certain revenue from Ireland, and there is a balance of about two millions a year left after paying the cost of Government; what then is the meaning of the auspicious moment that has to be awaited?—I could not tell you, unless it is to wait until some disaster has occurred.

35921. Now do you think it equally or expedient that matters of this kind should be left to such a succession of misadventures and chances?—I do not think so.

35922. Do you think there ought to be some general authority responsible for supervision of such matters? If this line were worth being made at all, should it not be made without laying an undue burden upon a particular district?—Yes, we agree with that.

35923. Before I finish with you, I just want this Commission—most of whom are Englishmen, anxious to do what they can for Ireland—to understand what sort of district this is that has been placed under this burden by the proceedings of those contractors and the neglect of public departments. Turn to the letter the Secretary wrote to Mr. Bryce in August, 1906. My friend Colonel Hutchinson Fox has pointed out already that the average annual rates in consequence of this railway have been in the East Division of West Corkery 1s. 13d. for the last five years, and in the West Division 8½ d.—Yes.

35924. What are the ordinary rates upon these poor districts?—I suppose it would vary from 10d. to 1s. in the pound. Do you mean the general rate?

35925. Well, take first the railway rate. In addition to the Schull and Sluikheen, they had to pay for the Bantary extension 4½d. in the pound?—They paid three guineas, and some of them never troubled about it.

Nov. 12, 1907.
—
Mr. Edward
Borrett, J.P.,
Chairman of
the Schull and
Sluikheen
Light
Railway.
Schull and
Sluikheen
Railway
(continued).—

The danger
of a serious
accident
alleged to be
imminent on
the present
condition of
the railway.

The hopes of
the Government
Department
seem to be
corrected.

The reply of
the Irish
Government
to the most
arbitrary letter
of a great

The heavy
burden on
ground on
the districts
served by
the railway.

Dec. 12, 1907.

Mr. Edward
Boycott, J.P.,
Chairman of
the Schull and
Skibbereen
Light
Railway.

The railway
rates paid in
the passenger-
ing area.

35685. The occupiers are liable for this rate?—Yes.
35687. The occupiers in these Western districts of
Cork and Kerry are much worse off than in almost
any civilized country?—The rate is only 87 in every
holding.
35688. The valuation?—The valuation of 27.
35689. What was the total rate that the occupiers
had to pay last year to the Schull Rural District?—
6s. 2d. in the pound. The occupiers in the Schull
Rural District for the year preceding this, 1906, had
to pay a rate of 6s. 2d. in the pound.
Chairman.—That is for everything?
35690. Mr. Boycott.—That rate is for everything,
and that rate was increased by about a shilling in
consequence of this railway?—Yes.

Mr. Richard
Evans, C.E.,
Engineer,
Schull and
Skibbereen
Light
Railway.

Schull and
Skibbereen
Railway:—
The evidence of
the persons
whose es-
timate.

The load
hailed by the
engineer, greatly
restricted, com-
pared with
other lines.

35691. Are you the engineer of this line?—Yes.
35693. You have heard the evidence of Mr. Boy-
cott?—Yes.
35698. Do you agree with the information that he
has given us with reference to the tracks, the rails,
the rolling stock, and other matters which he has re-
ferred to?—Yes.
35699. Have you anything to add to what he has
said?—No; I have calculated what the engines are
able to draw in comparison with another line.
35701. Give that information; that is new infor-
mation?—I find that our new engine carries very
little more than three times the weight of the driving
wheel. The driving wheels are twenty tons; she
carries very little more than sixty tons, whereas on
another line on which I am engaged, the engines will
carry twelve or thirteen times the weight of the driv-
ing wheels; that is four times more than we carry.
35702. That is in consequence of the gradient?—
Yes.
35703. What is the worst gradient?—One in twenty-
two.
35704. Is that a long distance?—Some of them are
half a mile long; they would be one in twenty-two in
parts and one in twenty-five in parts.
35705. Is it true that at the ends of these gradients
there are those sharp curves that we have heard of?—
Yes, there are some curves at the end of gradients
about half a mile long; there is a curve of less than
two chains.
35706. It is true that at the ends of these gradients
there are those sharp curves that we have heard of
and that you referred to?—One in twenty-eight.
35707. That is a very severe gradient?—And the
curve at the end of it is two chains fifty-five feet.
35708. Do you mean to say that the Board of Trade
inspector pointed that without any condition?
35709. Colonel Hutchinson Peck.—That is one of the
places where he restricted the speed to four miles
per hour.—They cannot keep the speed down there
if they have got a slippery rail; the speed goes more
than they want sometimes.
35710. Chairman.—Was it the limitation of that
gradient?—Four miles.
35711. Where does the limitation commence?—At
the top of the gradient.
35712. Did you say that in consequence of slippery
rails, and one thing or another, you cannot limit
yourself to that speed?—Not always.
35713. Have you had an accident there?—No acci-
dent—no.
35714. You have been fortunate?—Very.
35715. Do you also agree with Mr. Boycott that in
consequence of the bad construction and the gradients
and curves, the cost of maintaining this line is con-
siderably more than it ought to be?—Considerably
more.
35716. A considerable saving would be effected if
the line was put into proper order, the curves
straightened, and the gradients reduced?—No doubt.
35717. Is there a physical difficulty in reducing the
gradients?—No, there is not. I believe that if, when
they were constructing the line, they had spent about
£5,000 more, and instead of following the road all the
way, had taken it through fields, they could have had
a line with easy gradients and curves, and it would
not be an inch longer than this.
35718. Have you any estimate of what it would

35681. So that a man who had previously to pay
36s. (a sum of great importance to him) has now to
pay 42s. in consequence of this railway?—That is so.
35682. And the Skibbereen Rural District, how
much?—7s. 11d.
35683. No, the Skibbereen Rural District?—6s. 2d.
35684. And the Skibbereen Urban District, is not
that an extremely poor town, one of the poorest towns
in Ireland?—7s. 11d. in the pound?—Yes.
35685. And the Bantry Rural District, 4s. 6d. 1/2.
Yes.
35686. When this Commission consider the bearing
of these facts, they may be disposed to take some
special action in connection with these lines?—I hope
so.

Mr. RICHARD EVANS, C.E., EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

cost to put the line into proper working order?—I
have estimated roughly £25,000.
35690. For doing the whole thing?—The whole thing.
35690. And I think we heard from Mr. Boycott
that in the case of the other light railway the cost
was £23,500, do you think that was a liberal esti-
mate?—No, I do not; I think it is a very cutting
estimate.
35691. A cutting estimate?—Yes.
35692. What do you think; would £20,000 do the
whole thing?—I think so.
35693. Could you say that without any reservation?
—I can.
35694. £20,000?—£20,000.
35695. Had you not better name a figure that would
be more likely to do what you want than a lower one?
—Well, the more money we get, the better we can
make the line; if we got £30,000 we can improve it
considerably; if we got £20,000 we can improve it
more. We have got the trouble and the danger.
35696. Do you run mixed trains on that line?—Yes.
35697. Passengers and goods?—Yes.
35698. Then you think that £20,000 judiciously
spent on that line would bring it into good working
condition?—I do.
35699. And that working expenses would be con-
siderably reduced?—Yes.
35700. The benefit to the district would be great,
and the benefit to the railways considerable?—Yes.
35701. That is your view?—Yes.
35702. Mr. Herbert Jekyll.—Would there be any
difficulty in getting the necessary land?—No, it could
be got by a Provisional Order.
35703. You would have to get compulsory powers?—
Yes.
35704. You think it could be got at a cheap rate?—
I think so; land is not of much value.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON PECK.

35715. I think the loss—the deficit—on working ex-
penses on that line has averaged about £1,000 or
£1,200 a year ever since it started?—I do not know.
35716. According to this table, it is so?—Yes.
35717. In some years it was £2,000, but the average
is quite £1,000 to £1,200 a year?—Yes.
35718. I take it from the evidence you have given
us and from the evidence of the Chairman, a good
deal of that loss has been entailed owing to faulty
construction, the line having been made with steep
sharp curves, steep gradients, improperly equipped,
and so on?—Yes.
35719. Have you any idea of what the working
expenditure would have been under normal cir-
cumstances, assuming that the line had been properly
constructed in the first instance; as it is now, we
will assume that the loss on working expenses is
£1,200 a year?—We could save a great deal.
35720. Could you save 30 per cent.?—I think so.
35721. Could you save 40 per cent.?—I think so.
35722. That would be about £700 a year. In other
words, for the twenty years that the line has been
opened, the bounty has been called upon to pay £200
a year, which would have been saved; in twenty years
that would amount to £2,000?—Yes.
35723. That would have been saved if the Board
of Works had exercised proper supervision?—Yes.

* See Appendix No. 30

36004. Does not that, in your opinion, constitute some ground—that where manifestly a greatly increased charge has been incurred by the baronet through the neglect of a public department, that the public department should take some steps to make reparation?—I certainly think so.

36005. Would you go so far as to say that if they were to make the recoupment of the £10,000, which you may fairly lay at their doors, if they made that recoupment and gave another £15,000 by way of redemption of their liability, that would put you in possession at once of £25,000?—Yes.

36006. Which would put the line into a proper state of repair?—Yes.

36007. Under such circumstances, that would entail a slightly increased charge on the baronet for the whole of the £15,000. I believe your shares stand at a little premium?—I believe so.

36008. If they were not prepared to give any sum as a free gift, but simply to redeem their liability, the present annual charge, it would mean a present sum of £27,000, and if you took £25,000 of that, it would leave £12,000; that would be something like £10,000 worth of stock?—Yes.

36009. Even under such circumstances you would have the whole of your money to put all your line into a proper state of repair?—Yes.

36010. And the increased levy would only be £200 more than you are paying for nothing?—Yes.

36011. I wished that out, and that is what it actually comes to. I assume that in such circumstances you might reasonably anticipate that that extra charge would be recouped by the economy in working and the greater development of traffic in consequence of the better service?—Yes.

36012. That is putting it on the very most assumption, but if the Government were to make reparation in the way of £10,000 for the loss which they have practically brought upon your shoulders through their own incapacity and neglect, you would practically be called upon to pay nothing extra?—No.

Examined by Mr. ASHMAN.

36013. What would be the result of your levelling this line with the assent of money you have spoken of? Could you reduce the gradients very materially?—We could reduce the gradients about 1 in 50.

36014. That would make an enormous difference if you are quite satisfied about that. Under present circumstances, with your gradients of 1 in 25, the resistance due to gravity alone is nearly 90 lbs. to the ton, so that if you make your gradients 1 in 50 you would practically double the traction power of your locomotives?—Yes.

36015. Would you have to purchase much land for the purpose of improving the gradients?—We would have.

36016. Would you have to purchase much for the purpose of improving the curves?—Not very much.

36017. Until you got these curves improved, your present rolling stock cannot do any more work?—You could not haul a heavy load round some of the curves on account of the length of the train.

36018. You are satisfied that you could get a gradient of 1 in 50?—I believe we could.

36019. That would make an enormous improvement?—An enormous improvement. That could have been done very easily except that they have followed the roads so closely all the way.

36020. Chairman.—They did that to save money?—To save purchasing land.

Examined by Mr. ACWORTH.

36021. Mr. Reynolds's evidence was that the capital of the line was £27,500, and he thought that the contractor had gone off with £23,000 out of that?—So he says.

36022. If that were so, the line only cost £4,000?—Yes.

36023. And that included some rolling stock?—Yes.

36024. We may say that the line proper only cost about £30,000?—Yes.

36025. Now you are proposing to spend another £25,000?—Yes.

36026. In other words, you are proposing to throw away the whole of the first £30,000, and rebuild?—No, we would not throw away the whole.

36027. You are proposing to spend as much money as the contractor built the original line for?—As he spent on the line.

36028. That is £2,000 a mile?—Yes.

36029. You are running two trains a day, and your Chairman says that it is as much as the traffic requires?—Yes.

36030. Does it seem to you that it is good business?—Well, if you took nothing else than danger—36031. That is an important road, I suppose, that it runs along?—It is a country road.

36032. You are going to leave that road as it is—you are not going to benefit the road?—Diverge from the road.

36033. You are going to leave the road as it is; you are going to make a better railway, but you are going to leave the road as it is?—Yes.

36034. Supposing you have got £30,000 to spend for the benefit of the country, would you not spend it better in putting the roads in order and working them with some kind of motor traffic and giving up the railway? Supposing you have got £30,000 to spend—got it given you—would it not do more good for the country if you did some other kind of improvement—made a better road and worked motor traction along it?—I have not considered that question.

36035. What I ask you is, having already spent £27,000, is it worth while spending another £30,000 in order to make the railway where you only want to take two trains a day?—I think it is to an extent, because the railway is there and must be run.

36036. I agree, if the railway as there, it is worth while using it; but you say it is so bad that you cannot use it; that is what it comes to?—We can use it, but it is dangerous to use it.

36037. It is so bad that you do not want to use it any more. The point I am on is, is it worth while? would anybody nowadays build a new railway if they knew that the traffic was only going to be enough for two small trains a day—if they knew that it was only going to pay £3 lbs. a mile a week?—I think as the railway is there—

36038. But it is not. Your point is, that the railway is not there, because you are going to abandon it and make a new railway—spend as much as on the old one?—We should either improve the railway and improve the rolling stock, or else stop running altogether as it is.

36039. You have not considered the question of motor traffic in any way?—No.

36040. What is the gradient?—1 in 25?—Yes.

36041. You do not call that a bad gradient for road traction?—With a slippery road and a curve at the end.

36042. I mean, for road traction?—The gradients on the country roads are worse than that.

36043. Oh, they are worse than that?—I understood this was on the county road the whole way?—It runs off some.

36044. It runs off only a little part?—About a third altogether.

36045. The scale is not big enough to see it, but it looks as if it was on the road the whole way?—A great part of the way.

Examined by Mr. BERRY.

36046. You cannot say what proportion of the £27,000 was really spent on this line?—I have not calculated it.

36047. I think you can say that whatever part of it was expended on the line was badly expended, that as you have to renew so much, the expenditure would not now be so much additional expenditure as substituted expenditure?—I believe so.

36048. You would have to make seven miles of diversions?—A great many diversions.

36049. Amounting to about seven miles of road?—Yes.

36050. Then you have to replace the road by putting in proper sleepers and proper rails?—Yes.

36051. And equip the line with better rolling stock?—Yes.

Nov. 12, 1905.

Mr. Richard Evans, C.E., Engineer, South and Northampton Light Railway.

South and Northampton Light Railway (referred to)—The question of spending a large amount on improving the railway.

Proposed to close the railway and substitute a road motor service for it considered.

The improve-ments for which additional capital is required.

Nov. 12, 1907.

Mr. Richard
Scott, C.E.,
Engineer,
Saskil and
Saffron
Light
Railway.

Reholland
Railway
[continued].—
The estimate for improve-
ment of line.
The district
served by the
railway is
capable of con-
siderable de-
velopment.

36032. So that it is really an expenditure as new in its nature as if the line had never been made?—As you say, it is a substitution. If there had been £3,000 more spent on the line originally, we would not have to spend any money now upon it.

36033. I heard you say that your estimate was a close estimate; did you measure it on the principle of including everything?—I did.

36034. The rolling stock as well as the line?—Yes.

36035. And you believe that the capital expenditure of that sum would save the administration of this line from the necessity of fresh expenditure of that kind for a great many years to come?—It would reduce the maintenance, reduce the working expenses, and allow the train to run a good deal faster than it does.

36036. Is that district capable of much development?—I can only tell you how it has developed.—from 1884 to 1894 it has gone up 20 per cent. I am taking the traffic receipts for June—half-yearly—and it has gone up 50 per cent. from 1894 to the present time.

36037. I think you are entitled, upon the present question, to take the whole period, and I find that in 1888, which I think is the first unbroken year of the line, the receipts were £1,600; they are now about £3,000?—About £3,000.

36038. The receipts though small, are very buoyant?—They are about 50 per cent. more than they were.

36039. Nearly 100 per cent. more than at the beginning.

Mr. Hayeroff.—There are four copper mines open, and three more in the course of opening, and it will develop the resources of the country very much there. We have any amount of copper limestones there, there are 300 or 400 acres working there at present.

36040. What use is made of that?—There are about 1,800,000 tons there.

36041. If you develop that you find an export trade?—Yes.

36042. It is evident that those receipts might be very greatly increased?—Yes.

36043. You have to be always tinkering at the rolling stock and the rails?—Yes.

36044. All of which would of course cease if the rolling stock was once put in proper working condition?—Yes.

36045. The prospect, therefore, is a considerable development of the traffic receipts, and a large reduction of expenditure?—Yes.

36046. In the event of a proper reconstruction of the line?—Yes.

36047. Would it be beyond probability that you might immediately get rid of the loss on working expenses, and after no long period perhaps relieve the barony?—I should say we ought to reduce the working expenses very much, and I expect the traffic would increase, as it has increased, but I could not tell you how much.

36048. You have explained that in certain states of weather a train may at any moment escape control upon one of the sidings?—Yes.

36049. No human provision could be made against it?—No.

36050. And you apprehend that the first time that this happens upon one of those slippery gradients and sharp curves you may have a repetition of the Camp Hill accident?—Yes.

36051. You say that as an engineer?—I do.

36052. It is inevitable; it must go over?—It must go over.

36053. In the other case in which General Hutchinson speaks of the line making good the damage after the accident had occurred, do you think they might learn by experience to use the suspicious moment in this case so as to make it sure before the accident?—I think that would be the right time to do it.

36054. Mr. Asworth.—Just let me check your figures, I cannot quite make them out. There is an increase of 50 per cent. in the last ten years?—Twenty years.

36055. You said 1894, I think. That is what I have got. It is from £3,000 to £3,600. That is a little over 30 per cent. Am I not right?

36056a. Chairman.—Was he not referring to December, that year?

36056. Mr. Asworth.—I only want to get the figures right on the notes. I think Mr. Evans' figures were an increase of 50 per cent. since 1884. The figure I have here shows about 35.

36056a. Mr. Scott.—What are they for the current year? Perhaps the current year will show a proportionate increase.

36057. Mr. Asworth.—You cannot get the current year, because it is not out.

36057a. Mr. Scott.—It is nearly over; they can judge. (To witness).—Will the present year be better than the last year?—Yes.

36058. Colonel Hutchinson Per.—1895 was better than 1896.

36058a. Chairman.—We only want to clear up one point, about the 50 per cent.

36059. Mr. Asworth.—Am I not right in saying that you gave 50 per cent. since 1894?—Yes.

36060a. The figure in 1894 was £2,301, the figure last year was something under £3,000—about 30 per cent.—I took June.

36060. You must take the whole year.

36060a. Chairman.—Let him correct his figure. You are right about the 30.

Witness.—If you took the whole year; I took the June.

36061. Chairman.—Take the two Junes, and so whether you are right then.

Witness.—June, 1896, would be £1,061 receipts.

36061a. Mr. Asworth.—The year you gave was 1894.

36062. Chairman.—Take the year by which you made it 50 per cent.

Witness.—June, 1894, was £984, June, 1904, was £1,333.

36062a. Mr. Asworth.—Take the first complete year, if you like—the first half-year of 1893, the first year it was really working—£736—and it has only grown to £1,061, which is almost exactly 50 per cent.

Examined by Sir HERBERT JENKIN.

36063. What is your traffic on this line, passenger and goods; is it mainly passenger or is there a large amount of goods traffic?—A great deal of goods—not very many passengers.

36064. What is the goods traffic—is there a very heavy mineral traffic?—I do not know much about the traffic.

36064a. Is there any fish traffic?—Yes.

36064a. Cattle?—Yes, cattle—live stock.

36065. Colonel Hutchinson Per.—Your tonnage last year of goods carried over the line was 7,000 tons, an increase of 600 tons over the previous year, according to the Board of Trade returns, which corroborates your statement that there is a considerable increase of traffic.

MR. PATRICK MCCARTHY CROSS-EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

36065a. I think you are the General Manager of the Lister and Ballyhenry Railway?—Yes.

36066. This is the only Lister railway in the world?—It is the only one of its kind.

36066a. How long has it been opened?—Twenty years next February.

36067. What is its length?—It is three and a quarter miles from station to station, with three-quarters of a mile of sidings into a sand-pit.

36068. Has it been successful?—As an experimental line it has been a success.

36069. But not sufficiently successful to warrant its being adopted anywhere else?—Well, the present system is faulty, with the result that it was not adopted anywhere else.

36070. At present the Company is in liquidation, is it not?—Yes, the constructing Company.

36071. What is the capital of the line?—£30,000.

36072. And all subscribed by the public?—No.

36073. Guaranteed?—No, it is more or less private.

36074. There is no subpayment guarantee, or anything?—No.

Mr. Patrick
McCarthy,
General
Manager,
Lister and
Ballyhenry
Railway.

The Lister and
Ballyhenry
line is the
only Lister
railway in
the world.

36035. Just name the capital, will you—what is it—£22,000 shares and £11,000 loan capital?—That is so.

36036. Where does the railway run from and to?—From Lastered to Ballyhamon—a seaside place.

36037. Is your traffic principally passengers?—General merchandise and passengers principally.

36038. What are the receipts—how much a year—take it for last year, if you like?—I will take 1905.

36039. Yes, what was it in 1905?—£2,530 18s. 3d.

36040. Gross receipts?—Yes.

36041. What were the passengers?—£1,408.

36042. And the goods?—Goods, £230; minerals, 493.

36043. It is practically a passenger line?—Yes.

36044. Mr. Awerolt—I see the receipts in 1906 were worse than in 1905?—Owing to exceptional circumstances there was a small falling off.

36045. Chances—I see the goods traffic is very small, is that in consequence of the rates charged?—No, the resident population is less than 400, it is purely a summer traffic.

36046. Do you work in winter at all?—We do.

36047. What did you say the length was?—Ten miles.

36048. Is it a district that could be developed in any direction?—As a tourist district it could be very much developed with increased sailing stock.

36049. Passenger stock?—Passenger stock; and sand traffic also.

36050. That is from the shore for the land?—Yes, both for building purposes and for agricultural purposes.

36051. Where does the building sand come from?—From the sand-pits.

36052. That is where you have this siding?—Yes.

36053. And the sand for agricultural purposes, do you have any of that from the sea?—Yes; both are used for agricultural purposes, but the shore sand is preferred.

36054. Because of the lane in it?—Yes.

36055. Do you think that by this line being supplied with better rolling-stock and goods conveniences any traffic could be developed to benefit the district?—I am sure it could.

36056. In what way would it benefit the district? I can see it would benefit the Lartigue Railway Company, but how would it benefit the district?—By cheaper rates for sand; at present we charge 2s. per ton.

36057. For the whole distance?—Yes.

36058. Or for any distance?—It is 2s. from the shore to any distance?—There is a half-way station to which we charge 1s. 8d. a ton.

36059. You think that if you could carry more than would be more sand sent away?—I am sure there would.

36060. But you cannot find rolling-stock for it?—No.

36061. Because you have no means?—Because we have no means.

36062. Then as what you say?—Yes. I would like to point out the increase in the receipts for ten years. In 1895 the gross receipts were £1,904; in 1905 they were £2,549. There is a steady increase every year.

36063. Do you publish any accounts?—They are not published except that they are supplied to the Board of Trade.

36064. Can you tell us what are the working expenses in those two periods?—Yes; for 1905 the working expenses were £2,192.

36065. And the receipts—£2,549, the working expenses were 93 per cent. of the receipts. In 1895 the gross receipts were £1,904, and working expenses £1,745. That is about 91 per cent. of the receipts.

Mr. Stulen.—Last year.

Mr. Awerolt.—102 per cent. last year.

Colonel Hutchinson.—22 per cent. in 1905.

Examined by Mr. STULEN

36156. This appears to be a question of possible development of the district?—It is.

36157. Is Ballyhamon a good natural harbour?—It is.

36158. You have no pier there?—No pier.

36159. It would be a good harbour if you had a pier?—That is the great drawback.

36110. Would there be substantial trade?—Certainly. At present there is no means of landing fish at Ballyhamon; we see the Manx boats five or six miles off us.

36111. But if you had a pier at Ballyhamon you could develop the fishing industry for the markets of Limerick and other towns?—And we should be one day nearer to the English market if we had the fish landed at Ballyhamon.

36112. You mean that if you had a pier fish would get to the British markets a day sooner than now?—Yes, if the hauls could be landed at Ballyhamon in the morning the fish could be forwarded to England same day, whereas at present the boats have to return to Fout in the evening, and the fish is not forwarded until next day.

36113. Are the mineral resources capable of development?—Sound as.

36114. Nothing but sand; no building stone?—Yes, building stone also.

36115. Do you think that the establishment of a motor car service between Ballyhamon and Taubert would stimulate the tourist traffic?—It would, it would supply the missing link between Killybeg and Killybeg.

36116. And connect the existing lines of communication in the south-west?—That is so.

36117. A rail motor would enable you to make better connection with the Great Southern Railway?—Certainly; it would enable us to connect with every train on the Great Southern and Western Railway.

36118. Although you run five trains a day on your system, you are unable to connect?—With two of the principal trains.

36119. A rail motor would enable you to connect with every train?—It would.

36120. And that would develop the tourist traffic?—It would.

36121. Have you proper facilities for discharging into the Great Southern wagons at Lastered?—The expense of transhipping from our station to the Great Southern and Western is expensive a ton.

36122. How do you propose to deal with it?—If there was a short siding to enable us to run on, and drop sand from our wagons into the Great Southern and Western wagons.

36123. Your sand pits would be developed, and you could sell more cheaply to the farmers—at least, the person who sells the sand could?—Yes; at present the cost is about 5s. 9d. per ton at Newcastle West. If you could deliver there at 4s. 6d. you could increase it.

36124. And probably substitute Irish sand for foreign manure, to some extent?—Yes.

36125. Have you through rates for passengers and goods to the Great Southern?—No through rates for goods, but we have for passengers week-end tickets and tourist and excursion bookings.

36126. Through bookings for passengers, but none for goods of any kind?—No.

36127. Why is that, is it for want of physical connection?—My Company are not parties to the Clearing House, and there would be a little more expense; the clearing expenses would be more, and so on.

36128. You have, as I know, a very beautiful and beautiful watering place, and you have a district capable of being developed; and if you had a little more money, and better facilities, you would be able to improve the district, and get on very well?—I am quite sure of it.

Examined by Mr. AWEROLT

36129. Clearing House or no Clearing House, any member of the public might take steps to compel you to give a through rate, you know?—Yes.

36130. Nobody has ever tried?—No.

36131. You speak about saving a day by going to Ballyhamon instead of going all the way back to Fout, but they can go at present to Killybeg, cannot they?—They do not land in Killybeg except in the immediate fishing; the Manx boats do not go as far as Killybeg at all.

36132. Do they fish at Ballyhamon?—They do, it is the best fishing.

36133. And they do not go up to Killybeg. They prefer to go back to Fout?—Yes.

36134. And you think if you had a connection they would come to Ballyhamon pier?—Certainly.

Nov. 12, 1907.

Mr. Patrick McCreary, General Manager, Lartigue and Ballyhamon Railway.

Suggested extension of a pier at Ballyhamon to develop the fishing industry.

Proposed motor service between Ballyhamon and Taubert.

The mineral resources of the district and tourist traffic capable of considerable development.

Un satisfactory trans-shipment at Lastered with Great Southern and Western Railway.

Transshipment charges at Lastered might be obtained by the provision of a siding.

A (small) strengthening of the company necessary to enable pier to be done to the district.

A (small) strengthening of the company necessary to enable pier to be done to the district.

The question of through rates.

The provision of a pier at Ballyhamon.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Mr. Patrick
McCarthy,
General
Manager,
Lisnavea and
Ballynabon
Railway.

36135. You are proposing an expenditure of some £5,000 on rolling stock, and a certain amount for the siding, and then you would still remain separate from all the railways in the country?—The systems would be different, of course.

36136. Your railway is twenty years old?—Yes.

36137. I suppose you have not spent very much money on maintaining it—not more than you could help?—The rolling stock is well maintained.

36138. But how about the road?—The road is in very good repair also.

36139. Is the actual physical structure as good as ever?—The tracks require renewing; that has been a heavy item of expenditure for the last three years.

36140. I think you said the system had not been altogether a success?—I said it was a success as an experiment, undoubtedly.

36141. Suppose that anybody was going to make a railway from Lisnavea to Ballynabon, you would not recommend them to make a Larigue?—I am not in favour of light railways of any kind.

36142. Which would you recommend, an ordinary broad-gauge branch on which the Great Southern trucks could run down?—Yes.

36143. Do you think it is worth while anybody spending a good lot of money on this system; would it not be better in the public interest to sweep it away and replace it by an ordinary broad-gauge branch of the Great Southern?—The public would be in favour of that proposal.

36144. The shareholders of the Company, naturally, do not want to lose all their money; I quite understand that. But you must agree with me that the public interest, if money is to be spent, would be to make an ordinary railway?—Yes, that would be so.

Examined by Mr. AUSTIN.

"Larigue" system, cost of working.

36145. Is there any economy in the operation of this sort of railway as distinguished from another?—In the first cost?

36146. No, in operating it?—No, there is not any saving; but I might say that the expense of working is 1s. 10½d. per train mile; we run 25,000 train miles every year. It earns £48 a week, or £4 11s. 8d. a mile a week, and that is principally earned in three months.

Locomotive haulage power.

36147. You do not carry more than an ordinary tramcar would carry, do you?—160 passengers in each train.

36148. Can you take as many as that?—Yes; with three engines we carry 400.

36149. Do you really, in practice, take a train that seats 160 passengers with one engine?—Yes, and that up a gradient of 1 in 47.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON FEN.

The high rate charged for sand due to the scarcity of rolling stock.

36150. I see you state in your proof that you cannot reduce the cost of carriage of sand. Is that because you have not sufficient rolling stock?—That is so.

36151. The rate you say is two shillings a ton?—It is.

36152. Excluding terminals; I suppose you have terminal charges?—The cost of carting is sixpence a ton.

36153. If you exclude the sixpence terminal charges, that works out at twopence a mile for nine miles—a very heavy rate for sand?—That is twopence a mile.

36154. We had evidence yesterday that on the Timoleague and Countinaberry line they carry sand at a halfpenny a mile?—I do not believe in working at a loss.

36155. I see by the Board of Trade returns you are fairly well supplied with wagons?—Yes, we have twenty sand wagons.

36156. Of what capacity are they?—Three tons.

36157. That is sixty tons?—Yes.

36158. You have 3,600 tons of minerals—principally sand—and you think it could be treated if you had better provision of rolling stock, but surely the cost of providing double that quantity of rolling stock, in the shape of sand wagons, would not be a heavy cost?—We want an additional engine as well.

36159. And that would be a heavier item?—£5,000 would fully equip the line.

36160. Part of this capital is found by private individuals?—It is.

£5,000 required to equip the line.

36161. Are the people in the district interested in the line as regards the capital?—Only one, who put £200 on; that is the only local money in it.

36162. The whole of the rest of the capital is from outside the district?—Yes.

36163. I suppose those people, seeing that they get nothing on the ordinary shares, are not prepared to come forward and put their hands in their pockets to do any more?—I do not expect them to.

36164. If it was so largely in the interest of Ballynabon, which I take it to be, that little pamphlet, is a rising, fashionable seaside resort, you would have thought the local people would come forward and contribute the small amount of capital that is required for a supply of rolling stock?—You cannot get local people to invest.

36165. You say that the sand traffic, to speak of nothing else, would be loaded, and of course that would bring its own profit in return; but having that point, you speak of Ballynabon being a good harbour. I do not know anything about it, but looking at the map it looks like an open roadstead?—It is an open, but there is a good natural foundation for a pier.

36166. Have you gone into the question at all of what amount of money would be involved in making a pier suitable for the work of the fishermen?—Yes, we had an estimate from a competent engineer that £7,000 would make a very suitable pier.

36167. That is a large sum of money. You know that local authorities have power under the Act of 1885 to contribute towards such works?—Yes, the County Council, I am sure, would contribute something.

36168. And I suppose you have a District Council in Ballynabon?—No, Lisnavea is the District Council.

36169. You have no District Council at Ballynabon?—No.

36170. Has any suggestion for the improvement of the harbour been put before the District Council or the County Council?—Yes, it has been, but the District Council is so overladen in the way of railways that the ratemakers are not disposed to give any further guarantee.

36171. Mr. Austin.—County Kerry has been very heavily hit?—Very heavily.

36172. Colonel Hutchinson Pte.—You speak of the importance of establishing a motor service from Ballynabon to Tarbert?—Yes, it would, if boats were put on between Ballynabon and Kilrush. Of course the pier would not be a through service.

36173. You say a motor service along the coast from Ballynabon to Tarbert would be attended with success?—It would, no doubt, because the tourists would turn again and travel all round.

36174. You are aware that there was a coach service initiated under the Act of 1886 from Lisnavea to Tarbert, but after seven years it was found to be unremunerative that they had to stop it; do you think that the direction in which that service was established was the wrong direction?—It was the wrong direction, it was a great mistake.

36175. Who was responsible for the direction of that coach service; who put it in that particular locality?—In the first place, I suppose, some local people of influence, and in the next place, the Board of Works.

36176. It came there, I suppose, on the representation of the people of the locality through the Board of Works?—I expect so.

36177. I believe of six or seven services of a similar kind established at that time aware of them come to grief—every one of them practically found that they could not pay their working costs much less make a profit?—It appeared to be so considered.

36178. That is the point on which I wanted to ask your opinion. Do you think that the ill-success which attended nearly all these efforts was largely due to their not having been rightly directed, in the first instance, and to the want of—I will not say care, but of sufficient investigation as to the best localities for putting these services in?—I fear that is a fact. In the next place, they were too expensively worked—the equipment was too expensive.

36179. At any rate, given a service in a proper district, you think there is a fair prospect of its being attended with success?—I do, because the most interesting part of the Shannon would be seen

Examined by Mr. SKEWES.

36180 You say that the difficulty in districts such as yours requiring development, of which there are so many in Ireland, is that you cannot interest existing companies unless they see their way to immediate profit?—No.

36181 And an isolated district can bring no effective pressure to bear upon the Treasury?—No; we have no influence in our district.

36182 That is because you have been left to fend for yourself?—Yes.

36183 Is that in the interest of the country. All such districts taken together make up a great part of the country, but, acting separately, they are helpless. Do you say that if the Irish lines were administered by the public as a united system that would be the most likely way of creating the surplus funds by which the resources of a district such as yours might be developed?—I have no doubt to go into the general subject, but if you ask me, I believe that the amalgamation would be necessary.

36184 I put it in this way: suppose it was made plain that the purchase of the lines in general by an authority responsible to the public of Ireland would result in a large surplus by the substitution of public

credit for the present securities, and also a great saving by combined working as against the present system?—I have no doubt it would.

36185 Do you think that the advantage secured to Ireland by that means would secure great benefits no matter what system you might have?—Yes, under existing circumstances the duplication is too great, and there would be an enormous saving, I believe.

36186 Whatever system gave Ireland means to reduce the rates and perfect the transport system ought to be adopted?—And it would be better for the country.

36187 Mr. Ansell.—May I just understand that—£7,000 for the pier—would that give railway connection right on to the pier?—It would.

36188 That was in the estimate?—Yes.

36189 That was taking your railway on to the pier?—Yes.

36190 Sir Herbert Jekyll.—My recollection is that the railway stops at the top of the hill?—It does.

36191 Would not it be a difficult thing to get trams to the pier?—I have already plans prepared for the pier.

36192 Mr. Stewart.—Is the extension of that railway included in the £7,000?—It is.

Jan. 12, 1907.

Mr. Patrick McQuitty, General Manager, Midland Great Western Railway.

State purchase of the Irish Railway and control by a public authority recommended.

Estimated cost of a pier at Ballybun, and a railway connection.

Mr. JAMES O'BOYLE examined by the CHAIRMAN.

36193 Mr. O'Boyle, where do you live?—At Ten-ro, near Killahe.

36194 Are you in business there?—I do farming and a little business, but not on a very large scale.

36195 Do you hold any public office?—No.

36196 What railway serves your district?—The Midland Great Western.

36197 And you have dealings with that Company?—Yes.

36198 Are they of a satisfactory character?—I would not say that they are.

36199 Have you any particular complaints with regard to traffic that you have had on that railway?—Yes.

36200 Just tell us briefly what you have to complain of?—One thing is the high charge for sending cattle to show. For instance, in April, 1905, I sent a bull to the Royal Dublin Society's Show at Ballsbridge; I sent it by passenger train, and that beast was taken as far as Mullingar, where the truck was taken off. I had paid 85 per cent. extra to get the beast carried by passenger train, but the truck was taken off at Mullingar and did not reach Ballsbridge until seven o'clock in the evening, instead of being there at three o'clock. I do not think that that was fair treatment.

36201 Although you paid the full rate?—I paid 25 per cent. extra for it to go by passenger train.

36202 And you expected the cattle to go through by that train?—I expected it when I was prevented.

36203 And had paid for it?—And had paid for it. And they charged me for a single beast 30s., which I consider too much.

36204 Mr. Stewart.—Did the delay defeat your purpose in sending the animal to the Show?—If it had been a few minutes later the Show-gates would have been closed, as under the rules the cattle have to be in at dusk.

36205 Chairman.—At any rate, it just escaped being shut out?—Exactly.

36206 If it had been shut out the journey would have been useless?—It would have been.

36207 That is one complaint; have you any other?—In January, 1905, I ordered plough fittings in Wexford; they were sent off in time, and handed over to the Midland Great Western Company on 25th January, but they never turned them up to me. We kept writing and writing, and it was not until after I had been to a solicitor and he had moved them with notice that the Company paid for them.

36208 Why did they refuse the claim in the first instance, seeing that you did not get the goods at all?—At first they said they knew nothing about them; they laid it on to the other company.

36209 Which was that?—The Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway. But that Company proved delivery, and after about six months, when I had threatened to sue them, they paid. Then there was another case.

36210 Was that in January, 1906?—Yes, January, 1906.

36211 When was the next?—In July, 1906.

36212 The same year?—Yes. I got a mowing machine. These mowing machines are packed in crates and shipped across from America to North Wall. It was taken over by the Midland Great Western Railway, and when I opened the crate several of the parts were broken. Of course I could not tell whether they were broken or not until I had got the case home and opened it. But, unfortunately, I had signed for it, and the Company said they would not allow anything for it.

36213 You made a claim?—I did.

36214 And you got no satisfaction?—It was refused, as usual.

36215 Have you the correspondence with you?—No, I did not take note of the correspondence, I did not know this Commission was going to set.

36216 What is the next case?—In July, 1906, I sent two beasts to the Galway Show. I ordered a "P" wagon a week before the show, and made several journeys to see if it was in the station; they would not promise it, but said that I might go down in the evening and see if they had got it. It was the evening before the show that the wagon came, and the cattle went into it, and were very nearly too late for the show, because they did not leave Killahe until the last train, whereas they should have gone off by the first passenger train, about 7.30 in the morning.

36217 What train did it go by—in the evening?—1.30, which gets into Galway at 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening. For that they charged me 30s. Then the same Company took them on the 18th July in Galway at about 7 o'clock, and they did not arrive in Killahe until about 5 o'clock the next evening, although they were sent by passenger train. I could not find out where they had kept them or what they had done with them.

36218 What was the time of the journey?—They were loaded on 12th July at about 7 o'clock in the evening, and they did not reach Killahe until 5 o'clock in the evening of July 19.

36219 About twenty-two hours?—Yes, and the cattle were fasting all that time. I did not think it was good enough. Besides, they were a pure-bred bull and a pure-bred heifer. I do not think it was very fair treatment.

36220 And the rate paid was for passenger train?—Yes.

36221 Did you take that matter up with the railway company?—The railway company never heard me at all.

Mr. James O'Boyle, Ten-ro, Killahe, Co. Mayo.

Complaint as to damage to goods in transit over Midland Great Western Railway.

Repetition of liability by the railway company.

Delays to show cattle in transit between Killahe and Galway.

Company's satisfaction to complain.

Nov. 13, 1907.

Mr. James
O'Reilly,
The Sir,
Kililla,
Co. Mayo.Complaints
against the
Midland Great
Western
Railway
Company—Excessive
charge for
cattle from
Kililla to
Ballina.Failure of
company to
carry a
consignment
of cattle for
Kililla beyond
Ballina.The company
is alleged to
have charged
passenger
train rate
for cattle
conveyed by
goods train.Delay of
cattle from
Kililla to
Ballina.

36222. Now give us another case!—In September I sent the very same beasts to the Ballinacree Show, which is thirty or forty miles nearer than Galway, and the Railway Company charged me £2 12., whereas they only charged 38s. to Galway, thirty or forty miles further away. Returning on the evening of September 29, the Company had booked them, and contracted to carry them to Killa, but when they came to Ballina they refused to carry them any further. It was Saturday night, and there was no train supposed to go down until 10 o'clock on Monday. I could not leave the cattle standing there and fasting all that time, so I had to take them out at 11 o'clock at night and walk them home, and it was 5 o'clock in the morning when they reached home.

36223. You had to drive them?—Yes.

36224. From Ballina?—About twelve miles.

36225. Because there was no train?—Because there was no train. There was a special train going to Killa from Ballina on the night of September 29, and the station-master said he would get them on it. I told him to be sure and keep the train, and he said he would, and made every promise. Then when the train with my cattle was coming in he let the other special go away to Killa.

36226. Before you?—One train was up to the other—there was not three minutes between them. His excuse was that he forgot all about it. I had a ticket for Killa, the Company's servants collected that ticket, although I was entitled to use it any time within a month, and they refused to give it back to me. I wrote to the Manager about it, and explained matters; I could not get any satisfaction about the cattle, but he returned me the price of the ticket a week or ten days after, when there had been a considerable amount of writing.

36227. Mr. Serfen.—You own ticket?—Yes.

36228. But nothing for the freight of the cattle?—Absolutely nothing. And I do not understand why they should charge 6s. more to Ballinacree than to Galway, which is thirty miles further. Besides that, the 120 train that leaves Killa is a goods train, and they charge the 35 per cent. extra for passenger train on cattle which goes by that train.

36229. Chairman.—You mean to say they charged passenger train rate, although the traffic was carried by a goods train?—Yes. It is the only goods train.

36230. And you think that you ought not to be charged that 25 per cent. extra?—I do not mind paying it by the 7.30 in the morning, by the passenger train, but when it is a goods train I do not think they ought to charge it.

36231. Of course you have represented that to the Railway Company?—It is no use representing it.

36232. But have you done it?—Yes, but it is no use unless some public body takes it up.

36233. What is your next case?—On October 2, 1907, I sent oats to Killa Station to be sent to Ballina. I happened to go to Ballina three or four days after, and the man to whom I sent the oats asked me where they were; he said to me, "Where are the oats? You promised to send them, and you have not done so." "That is false," I said. He sent down to the station several times, and at last I heard that the oats were at Ballyvaughan Station, which is two stations further up the line.

36234. The consignment had been sent to the wrong station?—That was not my fault, I consigned it all right, but the man did not get the consignment until October 7. That was a serious disappointment.

36235. And the oats were sent away on the 3rd October, 1907?—Yes, and he did not receive them until the 7th, for a short distance of nine miles. That is not good enough either.

36236. Of course. But is not the explanation that it was sent in mistake to the wrong station?—I do not know how they did it.

36237. What station did you find them at?—They were at Ballyvaughan.

36238. Mr. Serfen.—Eventually, after five days, the oats were delivered at the proper place?—No doubt.

36239. Chairman.—You asked for an explanation of the delay in transit, did you not?—There was nothing with respect to the station-master at Killa; he sent them out in the usual way; he showed me that everything was properly done on his part.

36240. They were properly consigned?—Yes; the station-master at Killa did his part; three cannot be one word said against him; he did everything

all right. Then, there is another thing. The people in Killa complain very much about the accommodation of beasts. During the Exhibition in Dublin this year the railway company ran excursions; the ticket would be issued on a Monday, you would reach Dublin at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and in order to get home you would have to leave Dublin at 9.15 on Tuesday morning.

36241. That is to say, if they wanted to get home the same day?—They had to get home unless the tickets were extended.

36242. I do not know that there is any injustice in that?—But that is rather a short time; they could very well make the tickets available for the third day; that is what the people are all thinking.

36243. Do you know what fare was charged?—7s. 6d.

36244. For the return ticket?—Yes.

36245. With admission to the Exhibition?—No; you paid extra for admission to the Exhibition.

36246. Colonel Hurlstone Pce.—What is the ordinary fare?—27s. 3d., return.

36247. Chairman.—So that it was rather a cheap rate?—It was cheap, no doubt, but the people expected they would get the other day.

36248. At any rate, the Exhibition is over now, so that cannot be altered?—Certainly not. Then there is another thing that would accommodate the people very much. The train that leaves Dublin at 4.15 in the evening only runs as far as Ballina. It would be a great convenience if it was run on to Killa.

36249. Colonel Hurlstone Pce.—At what time does it get down there?—At various times; it is often an hour or half an hour late.

36250. But what is the time in the time table?—About 10.30, I think; but I am not sure about that.

36251. Chairman.—Have you any other cause of complaint?—In 1905 I ordered a plough from Messrs. Pierce and Company, of Westland, and when the plough arrived in Killa a part of it was broken, and the railway company would not pay for it. I had to get another plough for the man who was going to have this one, and it delayed him a week or so. It was not until three months after, when I threatened them with the law, and put the matter into a solicitor's hands, that they paid for it. If the plough had been handled properly by the Company's servants the breakage would not have happened.

36252. You did get paid for it?—Yes, after a time. Then, on April 15, last I sent a pure-bred heifer to the Dublin Show by the train leaving Killa at 7.30 or 7.45 in the morning, and I paid 25 per cent. extra for it to go by passenger train. The station-master told me that it would get into Ballinacree about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but it did not get there until 7 o'clock in the evening, in a mixed Southern and Midland train. When it got there, and was being taken out of the track, the stationer's agent said it was to be taken back again, as it was not consigned there at all, but to North Wall. I happened to come up at the time they were taking the heifer back again. I asked the agent about it, and he said that the heifer was consigned to North Wall, whereas the consignment was signed plainly "Ballinacree via North Wall." Had I not been there it would have been sent back again, and would have missed the sale. The railway company's agent said it was to be brought back again to North Wall.

36253. But you got it in all right?—Yes, but if I had not been there it would have been sent back to North Wall.

36254. I suppose that someone had misread the consignment note?—It was there as clear as two and two make four.

36255. Mr. Serfen.—Via North Wall?—Yes.

36256. To Ballinacree?—Yes, as plain as anything could be. The excuse for its having arrived so late was that an engine broke down or it would have been earlier.

36257. Chairman.—That may have been a legitimate excuse?—We do not know that; we cannot tell that.

36258. Then, with regard to small parcels; what have you to say on that matter?—Parcels weighing about 24 lbs. I can get ordered in London and they will be left in Killa for a charge of 2s.

36259. By parcels post?—No, by train; whereas if I get a similar parcel sent from the Bessborough Station, in Dublin, it will cost 1s. 10d. I do not see how it comes in.

36260. For the same weight and the same article?—Yes; there is only 2d. difference.

36261. Is from London?—Yes, and 1s. 10d. from Dublin.

36262. That does seem strange?—I do not understand it.

36263. Mr. Sexton.—It tends to develop the trade from England and to diminish the trade of Ireland?

—Undoubtedly. Then, in regard to getting plough strings from Wexford, I can get them as cheaply from Bedford or London as from Wexford to Killaish. Moreover, if there are any musins or broken pants, there are no through rates back to Wexford, although they have a through rate from Wexford to Killaish, but not back from Killaish to Wexford.

36264. Chairman.—Surely there must be some mistake about that. Are not the rates available either way? You say they are available only in one direction?—In one direction.

36265. And not the other?—There is a through rate to Killaish, but if you send the goods back you have to book them to Dublin, and they have to be booked again in Dublin.

36266. Chairman.—But we have been told that the rates are between places.

Mr. Follies.—That is the case on our line; they are always between places, and apply in both directions.

36267. Mr. Sexton.—Are there two lines in this case?—Yes. I ordered the goods from a man who has a through rate from Wexford to Killaish, but if I have any broken parts, or want to send the goods back to him, I have to book them to Dublin first and pay on them, and then they have to be booked again in Dublin and sent down.

36268. Colonel Hulsebrook.—You pay two local rates instead of one through rate?—Yes.

Mr. Follies.—There must be some mistake; that cannot be. The rates apply in both directions.

Witness.—I inquired into that.

Mr. Follies.—Did you ever write about it?

Witness.—The stationmaster had all particulars.

36269. Chairman.—With regard to cattle rates from your district to Dublin or Liverpool; do you find that they are too high to cultivate trade?—Yes; that is what I think. For instance, they can ship from Ballina to Glasgow or Liverpool, and they can get them about 3s. a head; but if they send odd cattle—and there are a lot of poor people there who cannot all afford to have wagons or even half-wagons—they have to send them by North Wall, and it will cost them something like 3s. a head.

36270. To where?—To either Glasgow or Liverpool, whereas if you had regular shipments they could get them there for 3s.

36271. I do not see the point. What do you complain of?—When a man wants to send odd cattle to Liverpool or Glasgow near North Wall, he knows that it will cost him 3s. a head rate to Dublin, and then about 3s. across from Dublin.

36272. That is 3s. 1.—Yes, and that is very high.

36273. You think that the rate operates against cattle being sent that way?—I think so. Then Ballina is a good market town—as good as there is in the West of Ireland. A lot of people come from the Killaish direction, from a very poor country, and if it happens to be a week-day other than Monday they have to pay 15d. for a return ticket.

36274. That is third-class, return?—Yes, but on a Monday they get it for 10d.

36275. That is a marked ticket?—Yes, I consider that 10d. ought to be enough any day for such a short distance.

36276. What is the distance?—About nine English miles; it is six by road. The people in the district are very poor, and they sell their fish and so on in the market town. Then the sanitary arrangements on the Midland are very bad. I remember, on December 13 last year, there was a fair in Ballina, and the train was late, as usual; the train was due at 4.5, but it did not leave until 4.45, when it was quite dark. But they would not accommodate the people in the third class carriages with lights, although they had lights in the first and second class carriages, where there were no people travelling.

36277. Surely that is not a general thing, that must be exceptional?—They ought not to do it. I

think lately they have been a little more particular, but it is only a little. I remarked the other night that they had put lights in the carriages, but they may have overlooked the thing.

36278. I suppose they are oil lamps?—Yes, some of them, but not all; some of them are gas. Then I think they ought to cushion the third class carriages like they do on other railways in Ireland.

36279. I suppose that the Midland, on all the new third class carriages they build, do provide cushions?—They have none with cushions, as far as I know.

36280. I am asking whether they do provide them in the new carriages?—Not in the new ones I have seen; they are very uncomfortable to travel in, especially long distances.

36281. Looking generally at your evidence, you are of opinion that lower passenger rates and lower rates for goods would be of great advantage to the district in which you live?—Undoubtedly.

36282. But the rates charged on the Midland Great Western are not out of proportion to those charged on other lines in Ireland, are they?—I do not know.

36283. The figures you have given us as to fares seem to be based on a similar scale to the fares on other lines?—Very probably.

36284. But you blame the scale; you complain that the whole scale of railway fares and rates in Ireland is too high?—Especially on the Midland, I think. I do not know the rates on the other lines.

36285. Because you do business with the Midland?—Yes.

36286. Have you considered whether it would be advisable to have amalgamation of these railways?—Either amalgamation or State purchase.

36287. Which would you prefer?—State purchase, I think.

36288. And managed by an Irish authority?—I should not care what authority it was, if it was a proper honest authority I should not care where it came from. Let Irishmen do it by all means, if you get the right people.

36289. Do you think that if there were State ownership and management by an Irish authority, many of these complaints which you have laid before us would disappear?—I think so.

36290. That is your view?—Yes, that is my opinion, seeing how the Post Office is carried on; everybody seems to be satisfied with that.

Examined by Colonel HORTON FOR

36291. With regard to these plough fittings on January 2nd and subsequently, your experience of the working of the Midland Railway has not been very favourable?—No.

36292. The evidence we have had with regard to that particular railway has been rather in the contrary direction. While traders have complained that the rates were high, they have generally said that the railway did us best in the interests of the district which it served, both as regards facilities and as regards attending to any complaints which were put before them. I gather from your evidence that that has not been your experience?—No, it has not. I do not understand why, if a parcel weighing 25 lbs. can be brought from London and delivered in Killaish for 2s., the railway company should charge 1s. 10d. for the same parcel from Broadstone Station in Dublin.

36293. I was not touching on that point; I was referring to your experience of the treatment accorded you by the railway company?—Exactly.

36294. According to your evidence it has not been very satisfactory?—No.

36295. Are you giving now solely your own views, or are you representing other people in your district in regard to these complaints and the attention they have received at the hands of the railway company?—In particular about myself.

36296. My point is that the evidence we have had with regard to the Midland Company is that they have been exceptionally courteous—perhaps more so than other companies?—I do not know about the treatment of other companies.

36297. The evidence shows that they have been exceptional as regards their treatment of complaints. Traders have generally expressed themselves as satisfied with the facilities afforded by the company

Nov. 12, 1907.

Mr. James O'Reilly, Trade, Killaish, Co. Mayo.

Suggested improvement of the Midland Great Western Railway's third-class carriages.

Irish railway rates and fares generally too high.

State purchase of the railway, and control by an Irish authority recommended.

Alleged inattention of the Midland Great Western Railway company to complaints.

Nov. 12, 1907. within their powers, though they have complained that they would like better facilities and lower rates. I am now on the subject of intention to your particular complaints?—Yes.

Mr James
O'Boyle,
Trafford,
Kilbala,
Co. Mayo.

36297. Chairman.—I understand that Mr. O'Boyle is making personal complaints, and is not representing anybody else?—Exactly.

36298. You are not speaking on behalf of others in the district?—No.

The traffic
from Kilbala
to Wexford
unimportant.

36299. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—About these being through rates from Wexford to Kilbala, and not from Kilbala to Wexford? Have you any traffic going from Kilbala to Wexford?—Sometimes I do have—milk and things. But the stationmaster told me that I could not book them through, that they had no through rates at all.

36300. That is traffic which has been received in the first instance from Wexford, and you are sending it back because there is something wrong with it?—Exactly.

36301. Have you, as a matter of fact, any export trade, if I may so describe it?—No.

36302. Probably that would be the answer the railway company would give, that with the exception of articles which you receive from Wexford, and which, for some cause or another you are obliged to send back, there is no through traffic going from Kilbala to Wexford?—I suppose that if there was a lot of stuff you might get through rates.

36303. That is what I wish to point out to you—that probably that would be the answer of the railway company?—But the stationmaster says that they have no through rates.

36304. Because they have no traffic to deal with, except these occasional milk?—Yes.

36305. How do you account for the fact that they never seem to run these trains beyond Ballina, which is only nine miles short of Kilbala?—There are only two trains per day into Kilbala and two out, except on Mondays, when there is a special at 11 o'clock.

36306. What are the times of those trains?—7.30 and 1.30, and in the other direction about 10.15 and 4.25 or 4.30.

36307. Chairman.—Is there no train after 1.20?—No.

36308. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—And is that 1.20 train in connection with the Dublin train?—It is in connection with the limited mail from Ballina to Dublin.

Defective
train service
between
Ballina and
Kilbala.

36309. A traveller coming from Dublin to Kilbala, via Ballina, would be able to get to Kilbala by that 1.20 train, supposing he left Dublin in the morning?—At 7 o'clock. He would get to Kilbala on a Monday about half past twelve. But if he came on a Tuesday, or any other week-day than Monday, he would have to remain in Ballina until 4.15 or perhaps 4.30, before he could get to Kilbala.

36310. But I thought you said just now there were only two trains leaving Ballina for Kilbala, one at 7.30 and the other at 1.20?—Except on Monday, when there is one at 11 o'clock, and waits for the limited mail.

36311. Chairman.—That is every Monday?—Yes.

Inconvenience
to passengers
from Dublin.

36312. Colonel Hutchinson Poe.—On other days you mean to say that a traveller coming from Dublin to Kilbala has practically to wait the night at Ballina?—If he leaves in the 9.15 he gets into Ballina about 4.20 on the evening.

36313. He has to wait all night there?—Leaving Dublin in the morning he gets to Ballina about 4.30; there is a train which only goes to Ballina, and it would be a great convenience to the people of Kilbala if that train could be run down to them; it is only 9 miles.

Suggested
improvement
of service.

36314. That is your point—that that train might, with great advantage to your district, be extended to your place?—Yes.

36315. Have you made any representations to the railway company to that effect?—I do not think they have.

Railway
company not
approached
on subject.

36316. If you do not put your grievance before them you can hardly expect the railway company to know that it exists or that there is a section of the people who wish to avail themselves of the train?—You cannot have public boards always passing resolutions.

36317. As far as you know, the people have not represented the matter to see if the railway company could give them a better connection?—I do not know.

36318. I think you complained that you had to pay the extra 25 per cent. passenger train rate for sending cattle from Ballina to Galway although it went by goods train?—Yes.

36319. Have you ever represented that matter to the railway company?—I have spoken to their servants about it.

36320. But have you written to the secretary or manager of the company?—No.

36321. I should have thought that in a case of that kind it would have been better to write to the head, to the general manager?—Exactly.

36322. But that you have not done?—No.

Examined by Mr. Sexton.

36323. How long have you been in trade in Kilbala?—For 10 or 12 years; I have lived there all the time.

36324. How long has that line been made from Ballina to Kilbala?—15 or 16 years, I should think.

36325. All the time you have been in trade?—It was made before I was in trade.

36326. It was there when you began to trade?—Yes.

36327. I notice that your complaints cover a period of only 2½ years?—That is because I did not go farther back to collect them. We never thought that the Railway Commission was going to sit.

36328. Did those cases of complaint begin to operate 2½ years ago, or do they extend over the whole period of your experience?—They occurred on these very dates, and there were reasons for complaint before that.

36329. I mean if you could now go back over the whole period you have been in trade would you have complaints over the whole period?—Yes.

36330. As many?—For the whole period since I began.

36331. As many proportionately?—I do not think I had so many as lately.

36332. Are there many trades in Kilbala?—There are not many like that.

36333. Do you know Ballina, too?—Yes, well.

36334. Do you have intercourse with the trades there?—Yes.

36335. Are your causes of complaint peculiar, or do they extend to other people?—They only extend to myself.

36336. I know, but what is your view—do you think that your causes of complaint are peculiar, or do other people suffer from them also?—They do suffer, of course, but the railway company pay their claims now and then, and when their claims are paid they sometimes overlook them. I hear several people complaining every other day about the railway company.

36337. Do you think the experience which you put forward on your own behalf affords a picture of the general state of things, have other people a similar experience?—They have; there is not a man in trade but suffers at some time or another.

36338. We are sometimes told here that this system of the private ownership of railways, the system of private companies, competition and so forth, secures prompt and fair settlement of claims and disputes, that is not your experience?—No.

36339. Do you think, for instance, that if the railways were held under a public authority, a public department, responsible to public opinion, disputes such as yours would be dealt with more promptly?—If they were held and worked as the Post Office are done, you would hear very little complaint. I never hear complaints of the Post Office authorities.

36340. Still more, suppose the railways were directed by an authority responsible to Irish public opinion would not that afford the most likely means of prompt attention to claims and disputes?—It should, I think, if you get the body to do the thing properly.

36341. The Post Office, of course, is a different sort of case?—Yes.

36342. The Post Office is responsible to authorities in London?—Undoubtedly.

36343. But if you had an authority in Ireland, responsible to the Irish people themselves would not that be the most likely way to get redress?—Yes, if you could get it worked out that way.

36344. You have given us as many as, I think, nine specific causes of complaint in this short period of

two and a half years. It appears from what you say that, even when you paid twenty-five per cent. extra to have cattle carried by passenger train, and when the object of that extra payment was entirely defeated by delay, the railway company never refunded either what you have paid, or even the excess charge for carriage by passenger train?—Never.

36345. They failed to perform the service, although they had been paid the excess rate?—They have to get the cash.

36346. I gather also from your complaints, that you were not compensated whether the consignment was damaged or whether it was lost?—There was one parcel lost, but they paid for that.

36347. But I gather from your evidence that you got no compensation until you proceeded to threaten law?—Yes, the solicitor got it into his hands.

36348. Did you get any compensation in any case until you threatened law?—I did, but it was only a few pence, for a small article.

36349. In the case of the moving machine?—I never got anything there.

36350. You were obliged to sign for it before delivery?—Yes.

36351. And as it was wrapped up, you could not tell in what state it was until you took it home?—Certainly not.

36352. And you then found it had been damaged?—Yes.

36353. And then advantage was taken of the technical circumstance that you had signed for it?—Yes.

36354. The merits were ignored and compensation refused?—Yes.

36355. In the case connected with Ballinacree fair, you had arranged and contracted to have your cattle conveyed back to Killaola on the Saturday night?—That was only verbally, not in writing.

36356. But it had been arranged?—Undoubtedly.

36357. An arrangement ought to be as good made orally, except that writing is a further evidence?—That is it.

36358. The agreement is the same in substance?—Yes.

36359. You had to take these cattle from Ballina and walk with them twelve miles to Killaola?—I did not walk myself, I sent two men with them.

36360. On the Sunday morning early?—It was the early hours when they got back.

36361. You had paid 45s?—Yes, I think.

36362. For the carriage of those cattle?—Yes, exactly.

36363. With the result you have stated?—Undoubtedly.

36364. And the amount of compensation you received was eightpence?—Yes.

36365. Although you were entitled by the contract to have these cattle back in Killaola about midnight on Saturday, and you had to employ two men to walk with them until five o'clock on Sunday morning. Do you think you had a case for compensation, apart altogether from the return of the freight?—To go to law in the last thing I would like, it is rather expensive sometimes.

36366. It is disagreeable?—Very disagreeable.

36367. But in your case, it is not discouraging to find that in each case, when you threatened to go to law, you got the matter settled?—Yes.

36368. That rather tends to encourage litigation, I think?—That is the fact.

36369. At any rate, your experience leads you to believe that if the railway with which you are concerned were subject to a public authority you would have fewer disputes, less delay, and more satisfactory settlements?—That is my belief.

36370. Do you think that the small parcels rates operate very injuriously to Ireland?—I think so; there are a great many parcels sent back-wards and forwards from different places, and the charges are high. If you go to a post-office with a parcel, you can get it left at the house for the very same price that you would have to pay at the railway station, and then, in addition, you have got to walk to and from the railway station.

36371. In the case which you have given, a parcel can be sent from London or Bedford to the West of Ireland, carried and delivered for two shillings, while from Dublin it is 1s. 10s. 6d.?—Yes.

36372. If that is a general case, it means that in process of time trade of that description will pass across to England?—It would, and is doing.

36373. And the intervening trader or retailer in Ireland would be crushed out?—Yes. They are bad enough as they are.

36374. Does it not rather look as if that were the object?—I would not like to give an opinion upon that.

36375. But it is the effect?—It looks very like that.

36376. And if you see a whole system framed upon that basis, so as to encourage and invite the consumer in Ireland to order his goods from England I think the effect in course of time must be to destroy that class of trade in Ireland?—It becomes serious.

36377. And one is disposed to suspect, when such is the effect, that such may be the object?—I cannot say, but it looks very like it.

36378. Then about passenger fares. The poor people in Ireland—working people in towns, labourers, and small occupiers—have very little money to spare after paying for the necessities of life?—Very little. Many of those who go to Ballina would not have two shillings in their pocket, and they would think twice before paying half of it for a railway ticket; they would rather walk.

36379. What does the Irish labourer get per week in your part of the country?—About 1s. per day if you support them, and without support I have known them get from 7s. to 10s. a week.

36380. Seven to ten shillings a week to support himself and his family?—To support himself and his family. He might have an acre of land and a little home. It is not many get 10s.

36381. The small occupier is sometimes even worse off, so far as cash is concerned?—That is worse.

36382. He has less money?—Yes, and is in debt.

36383. And these form the main body of the Irish community?—They do.

36384. Would they have more than 1s. or 2s. to spend at the outside after buying the bare necessities of life?—I am afraid they would not. Were it not for the food industry I am afraid they would not stand at all.

36385. Where the scale of third class fares is not 1d. or 1½d. a mile, as it is in some other countries, but a penny a mile, is that a tolerable or practicable scale having regard to the circumstances of these poor people, and they are to pay it?—They cannot. Do you mean a penny a mile single or return?

36386. Single?—They would not be able to afford to pay it.

36387. That is the third class now?—They can go to Ballina and back for 1s. 3d.

36388. For what distance?—That is a return ticket, and the distance is, I think, nine miles.

36389. That is practically a penny a mile for the single journey and a halfpenny or more for the return?—Yes.

36390. Do you think that the people who enacted that the third class fares should be a penny a mile ever took into account what the Irish people have in their pockets, or gave themselves any trouble about it at all?—They never thought once over it.

36391. Does it not work out in that way, that few people can travel at all even by third class?—There are not many travelling in the West of Ireland.

36392. And that the few who do travel travel seldom?—Seldom.

36393. If the third class fare were a halfpenny a mile, as in other countries, with a proportionate reduction on the return ticket, people who leave would travel oftener, and people who do not travel at all would travel sometimes?—Exactly.

36394. And eventually the railways might be profitable?—That is my argument.

36395. You say that goods rates also require to be reduced very much?—I think so.

36396. Have you followed the course of the evidence given before this Commission or given any attention to it?—Not a lot. I know that in the case of oil-cake if a farmer in the country wants to buy some and orders it in Dublin, it costs 15s. a ton to deliver it in Killaola, whereas if he gets it by boat he gets it cheaper.

36397. Have you noticed how the export trade of Ireland is affected by the very favourable arrangements made for the admission of food products from abroad into England?—I have noticed that.

36398. If that goes on and develops as it has been developing for the last few years it is not that bound to diminish and hamper the export trade of Ireland?—It is.

Nov. 12, 1903.

Mr. James O'Toole, Dublin, Killaola, Co. Mayo.

The scale for third class passengers too high for the poorer elements in Ireland.

Average labourer's wages in Mayo.

Passenger fares not found to suit the Irish people.

The passenger traffic restricted owing to high third class fares.

A revision of the goods rates and arrangements required.

Ireland's export trade affected by favourable import arrangements.

Nov. 22, 1897.

Mr. James
O'Reilly,
Traffic
Kilbale,
Co. Mayo.

A section of
the railway
rates to
encourage
Irish in-
dustry.
necessary.

The facility
of looking to
the railway
companies for
a general
reduction in
rates.

Public own-
ership of the
Irish railways
declared to be
the only
remedy for
existing
inconveniences.

36399. And make it more precarious than it is at present?—It will make it far worse.

36400. We know that import rates into Ireland from England are low?—Undoubtedly.

36401. So that the Irish manufacturer has no chance to lift his head?—He has absolutely no chance.

36402. If the present system of railway rates is continued you will have a restriction of the agricultural output of Ireland, and you will have Irish manufacturers prevented from attaining any development?—That is a fact. It is nearly all German goods one sees in Irish towns now.

36403. And there are growing imports of dead meat into Ireland?—Undoubtedly; every other day it is increasing.

36404. A radical reform in the system and incidence of railway rates will be necessary for the economic progress of Ireland?—I think so.

36405. How is the reduction to be obtained? You understand that the railway companies have their shareholders to pay, and that if such a reduction as you consider necessary were imposed upon them by law their dividends would disappear in many cases, and the value of their stocks would sink to a fraction of what it is at present?—Unless the State comes to their assistance and does something for the shareholders.

36406. Does it come to this, that there is positively no way of escape out of the difficulty except that of public ownership of the lines?—That is my belief.

36407. If public credit were applied to the purchase of the lines the annual charge for interest on capital would be much less than it is at present?—That is the fact.

36408. And if all the lines were worked as one the saving would be very large?—It should be; there should be a large saving.

36409. And out of the funds created in that way you could reduce the rates and fares, and proceed gradually to see whether the reduction of rates and fares produced development of traffic?—Yes, and get it; you would very soon see it.

36410. The question could be solved without any substantial risk?—It should be very easy to solve it, I think. In some Irish districts rates cannot be low enough for the people, they are so very poor.

36411. When you have an undeveloped country it is obvious that if developed countries have favourable rates you must make the rates in the undeveloped country as low as you can in order to enable it to compete at all?—Undoubtedly.

36412. It is sometimes suggested that companies formed for private profit and managed by those who represent the shareholders are likely to be managed more economically and more efficiently than a public

system. But if a public system were established in Ireland of course the object would be to reduce rates and fares?—Yes.

36413. Could that object be attained except by efficient and economical working?—The lines require to be worked efficiently and economically in order to attain that object, do they not?—Yes.

36414. If there were an elected body in charge of the lines, responsible to the people, having to come forward for re-election periodically, do you not think the interest of the people in the reduction of rates and fares would secure such pressure of public opinion as would make for economical administration?—It is due to them that they should.

36415. Do you think that they would be very likely to elect at it?—I think they should.

36416. As to expert management: Every big railway has an expert engineer, locomotive engineer, traffic superintendent, and so on. If all the lines were embraced under one control, would it not be quite practicable and easy for the elected body which might be placed in charge of the lines to have under it a board of experts which would be much stronger and more capable than any expert assistance any single railway can now command in Ireland?—That is so.

Mr. Telford.—Might I make one observation in reference to the train service? I would like to point out that this Kildare branch is one of the lines made under the Ballinac Act. Kildare itself is a small place of 510 inhabitants; the traffic is exceedingly poor; the line is worked at a loss; we run two trains each way daily and one extra on Mondays, which is in accordance with the agreement. These trains are in direct connection with Dublin in both directions, and the Monday train is the market train.

Witness.—It is very inconvenient for people who leave Dublin later than 9.15 in the morning to have to remain all night at Ballinac.

Mr. Telford.—If people leave Dublin at 9 o'clock in the morning they can reach Kildare. It must be remembered that if the Midland Great Western had never undertaken to work the line and contribute to the construction Kildare might not have had a railway to this day.

36417. Sir H. Jervis.—Is the line from Ballinac to Kildare an extension of the Midland Great Western—the same gauge?

Mr. Telford.—Yes. The systems were light railway systems, the Midland Great Western worked them. They are the same gauge, and the Midland Great Western actually contributed themselves towards the construction of this line. It is very poor traffic indeed, and there is a loss in working.

Witness.—I think that sometimes when there is a fair good year of crops they get a good amount of traffic out of it.

Mr. JAMES COLLINS examined by

Sir HERBERT JENKIN (in the Chair).

want to get parts in a hurry, heavy stuff, such as

mowing machines and that kind of thing, they come now in two days, which I think is a fair time. But smaller things, if sent from London any time up to six o'clock in the evening, we get before twelve o'clock the following day; but if we get them from Wexford we cannot get them until six o'clock on the second day. It takes much longer to come from Wexford than from London.

36420. It takes longer from Wexford than from London?—Much longer.

36421. You wish to say something about Belbeggan?—We are at a great disadvantage at Drogheda if we send any goods less than a wagon-load; in fact, I think it applies to several of the stations between Drogheda and Dublin. The goods are not delivered till the next day. If you send goods to Gormanstown they are sent on to Belbeggan, and they do not come back until the next day.

36422. Mr. Seres.—They are carried past the station?—Yes. They tell me that they will come back by the next train, but my experience is that they do not come back for two days. The same applies to other stations, I think, unless you have sufficient goods to make a wagon-load. The goods trains run

Mr. James
Collins,
representative
of the
Drogheda
Chamber of
Commerce.

Complaint as
to the service
for parcels
between
Wexford and
Drogheda.

36417. Mr. Collins, I think you intend to give evidence on behalf of the Drogheda Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

36418. Do you live in Drogheda?—I do.

36419. And you carry on business there?—Yes, a very extensive hardware trade.

36420. You have some complaint to make about the length of time it takes goods sent from Wexford to arrive?—Is not that so?—I am happy to say that that is much better now; I think we get them in two days. But the parcels traffic is extremely bad. We can get parcels from London the next morning, but from Wexford we do not get them until the next evening.

36421. Is your point only with regard to goods sent from Wexford?—Parcels we are talking about now. Goods come properly now; twelve months ago they did not. They have improved since very much.

36422. The grievance of your complaint is remedied?—As far as goods are concerned, but parcels are extremely slow still. We never get them till the following day; whereas we can get them from London in twelve hours, they are almost eighteen hours coming from Wexford.

36423. Why do you take Wexford—is there a large traffic in parcels from Wexford?—It is not large. There are successful manufactures there, and if you

in such a way that they do not stop there from Drogheda except for big consignments.

36427. Wagon-loads?—Yes; that is the usual experience.

36428. Sir H. Jekyll.—Then you have something to say about through rates?—I think they are very high. We have to compete with Dublin and Belfast; they get rates to Windlow for 17s., and we pay 23s.

36429. Have you no direct sea communication?—We have better. We have occasional boats, and then we can get goods at 15s. We have no complaint about that.

36430. Does not the sea competition affect the railway rates?—Not a bit. We had a coasting service, and while that was in force the railway company charged us very much less than they are doing at present; but immediately the coasting service was taken off they put up the rates. There was a coasting service from Wexford and Dublin.

36431. Mr. Serles.—And Derry?—And Derry. The railway company used to carry oil for 5s. a ton during that time; they put it back to 6s. 6d. when the service was taken off. It is now at an advance of about 1s. a ton. The traders rather think that when the railway company reduce the rates there should be some means of keeping them there; to reduce rates just to kill opposition, and then as soon as the opposition is killed to put them up again is not fair.

36432. Sir H. Jekyll.—I suppose you know that if a railway company raises its rates, even if they only lowered them temporarily, it challenged by a trader before the Court of the Railway and Canal Commissioners it has to justify the increase?—Yes, I have heard something of that, but I am not very well up in it.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON

36433. Mr. Serles.—You contract the quick delivery from London with that from Wexford?—Yes.

36434. Can you apply that more widely?—We get splendid delivery from all the main lines in England—from Birmingham, Wolverhampton, London, and all those places. We are talking about parcels now.

36435. Parcels especially?—In fact, we always get them until, at the earliest, late the next evening, and splendid service. But from Wexford we do not get them until, at the earliest, late the next evening, and very often the following morning.

36436. Take England first. Do you mean to say that not only from London, but from any other important point, you get them more quickly?—I mean that from any where on the London and North-Western line—from Birmingham and that district, and so on, we get them; there is a splendid service.

36437. Do you get them as well from Sheffield?—Sheffield is the worst delivery, I think.

36438. But generally there is a good delivery?—A splendid delivery generally.

36439. Now, about Irish points of departure. Have you anything to say about other places than Wexford?—Practically I do not get them from other places.

36440. The conditions are bad in the case of goods, but worse in the case of parcels?—We get goods in two days now; I think that is very fair.

36441. I thought you said three days?—That was twelve months ago; they have improved.

36442. But parcels have not improved?—No; they are very slow.

36443. What is the point about the goods? Why is it the Great Northern will not deliver goods at intermediate stations?—They have fixed the goods trains, one to leave about ten o'clock at night and the other about four o'clock in the morning. Then they run on to Ballinagass in some cases, and transport goods, and in other cases they go on to Dublin. Whole wagon-loads they will manage, but small consignments they will not.

36444. I suppose in the case of wagon-loads they can take the wagon off?—Yes; I think they would.

36445. But if there is less than a wagon-load they have to move it out of the wagon?—I believe that is the custom.

36446. It is a matter of convenience for the passenger train?—Goods train, too.

36447. One would suppose that even at intermediate stations goods might be discharged?—There would be no one there to take them; it is late at night or early in the morning.

36448. Have you much experience of export rates beyond the one you mention?—Not very much. There are great complaints about the charges for rabbits and that class of stuff to Liverpool and Manchester. The rates for rabbits to Liverpool is 30s., which is a very excessive rate. The rabbits are worth 52. or 6d., and the rate is 1d. or 2d. apiece.

36449. About 25 per cent.—About 15 per cent, and to Manchester it is 30 per cent. I think that is ridiculous.

36450. I suppose you would hardly question the evidence here that the export rates from Ireland as food products generally are high compared with the terms upon which food is brought into Great Britain from other countries?—I am quite sure of that.

36451. And unless we get that altered we will never be in a position to compete on fair terms in the British markets?—That is so. Might I say a word with regard to the passenger service? The train service with Drogheda is so bad that people cannot come unless they leave about 7 o'clock in the morning, which is very early.

36452. Leave where?—Rush or Skerries. Except you leave about seven in the morning you get in a later train arriving at twelve o'clock. Then the only train you can return by to half-past five leaves at nine minutes to one. So that you get down at twelve o'clock, and have to return before one o'clock; the time is too short.

36453. And that greatly hinders trade in your town?—It is a very great hardship. On the other hand they get reduced fares from Ballinagass after one o'clock. A train was put on by the Great Northern running from Dublin as far as Ballinagass. It stops at Ballinagass. If that train ran on to Drogheda it could return, as it used formerly, at half-past two, and that would give a reasonable time for people to do business. As it is they practically cannot come, the service is so bad. That train runs to Ballinagass, and stops there.

36454. So far as you can discern, there ought to be no great difficulty in adjusting trains so as to allow of people doing trade in your town?—We have asked them to do that, but they say the train does not pay.

36455. That the train does not pay is the reason given. That appears to be one of the results of administering railways by a number of private companies which simply think of dividends. If you had the railways administered by a public authority, as a unified system, the question of whether a particular train paid or not would not be final against it?—Quite so. We have an extremely bad service with Navan. A train leaves Drogheda each morning about ten past eight; the other train leaves Navan at ten to nine. If the train left a quarter of an hour earlier it would connect with the whole system.

36456. You are unable to discover why this should be?—Yes.

36457. You suffer inconvenience, and you do not see why it should exist?—I do not know. I suppose it is some arrangement between the railway companies. I imagine that each railway company is only allowed to run a certain number of passenger trains, and there would be very few passengers, and the Great Northern select the times when there will be the greater number.

36458. Has this always been the system of the Great Northern Company?—As far as Navan. You want to get on the Midland there.

36459. Does it occur to you that each railway seems to be a great deal hindered as if there were no other railway in existence but itself?—That is so.

36460. As independent territories regarding nothing beyond their own frontiers?—Quite so.

36461. Is that the right principle?—I am sure it is not.

36462. If the railway companies were managed so that a man might travel as fast and as far as possible each day from any part of the country to any other do you think that that would be the true principle on which they should be worked?—Of course it is.

36463. Regarding the railways as public highways?—Quite so.

36464. What about the coasting steamers; how long were they running?—About a year and a half, and very satisfactorily on the whole.

Nov. 12, 1897.

Mr. James Collins, representative of the Drogheda Chamber of Commerce.

Complaints as to excessive rates for food products to Liverpool, high compared with rates for similar goods from other countries to Great Britain.

The present passenger train service a convenience for Drogheda.

The system of administering railways by private companies unsatisfactory.

The existing railways administered selfishly.

Duration of the coasting steamers' competition.

Nov. 12, 1897.

Mr James
O'Brien,
representative
of the
 Drogheda
 Chamber of
 Commerce.

The effect of
the coasting
steamers' competition on
the Great
Northern
Railway
Company's
goods rates.

Railway and
steamer rates
kept on a
level for
heavy goods

Railway rates
increased
since with-
drawal of
steamers

Question of
alteration of
rate-books

For action
taken by
Chamber of
Commerce to
have ex-
cessive
reduced

Duration
of steamer
competition
less than
two years

36464. Can you tell us any personal experience of your own? Did they enable you to get reduced rates on the Great Northern?—Certainly. We used to pay 6s. 6d. for oil; that was reduced to 5s., and several other things were reduced.

36465. When you got your dockets before the coasting steamers were established was the rate per ton shown?—Usually.

36466. After the coasting steamers began to run was the rate per ton shown by the railway company upon the docket?—Yes.

36467. The lower rate?—Yes.

36468. The lower rate per ton?—Yes.

36469. And since the coasting steamers have entered do the dockets now show the higher rate again?—I know several people who used them, and they tell me so.

36470. The higher rate is shown?—I know a higher rate has been put on, but I have no particulars of the lower. The railway company canvassed me several times, but I did not try it.

36471. But you know others who did?—I have heard so.

36472. Did the railway company while the steamers were running charge as low a rate as the steamers?—For all heavy items, for instance, for flour and oil, anything that was weighty, they reduced the rate on them.

36473. Was it as low as or lower than that of the steamers?—I think it was usually the very same rate. Some people told me that they actually offered to carry goods more cheaply, but that was not my experience.

36474. Have they gone back now to the rates as they were before the steamers began, or are they higher than then?—I believe they are the same rates as before the steamers began to run; they did not alter many of the rates; they only altered those on the leading things; small packages they did not alter.

36475. Do you ever look at the rate-books?—I do not.

36476. Do other traders?—I do not think they do, I think we should do.

36477. If the rate-book corresponds with the dockets it would appear that they must have reduced the rate in the rate-book while the steamers were running and have raised it again since?—They reduced the freight certainly; whether they altered the rate-books or not I do not know.

36478. If they did not alter the book they must have issued dockets with rates not contained in the rate-book?—I do not know.

Examined by Colonel HURCHESON P.C.

36479. You represent a rather important body—the Drogheda Chamber of Commerce?—Yes.

36480. Though you are not in a position to speak with authority as to whether the railway company actually reduced the rates and entered them in the rate-book while the steam-boat service was in competition, still I should have thought that a representative body like the Drogheda Chamber of Commerce would have taken the trouble to ascertain whether as a matter of fact such a practice was in force on the part of the railway company?—I do not think they have done so.

36481. It would have been very important for this Commission to have had evidence from such a body as the Drogheda Chamber of Commerce to this effect. Am I right in saying that there was a steamship service some eight or ten years ago?—Quite recently.

36482. But was there not one which was only a step to?—I believe there was, to Kewry.

36483. And to Dundalk?—Perhaps so; it was not to Drogheda.

36484. When that company was forced out of existence the railway rates went back; we have had evidence to that effect. How long was this company to which you refer working?—About two years ago it commenced, and it has been off two or three months.

36485. So that practically its life was about eighteen months?—Yes.

36486. And you are not in a position to say whether the reduction of the railway rate was given back in the form of a rebate or whether it was a rate actually entered on the rate-book?—I believe it was not

given as a rebate at all, it was not given as a rebate. Whether or not it was entered on the rate-book I cannot tell you, but it was a reduced rate.

36487. Mr. HURCHESON.—I think your evidence is that a charge appeared on the dockets?—Quite so, on the docket.

36488. Colonel HURCHESON P.C.—Are you quite certain of that?—It is so as to giving us heavy evidence or what you think. From your own experience are you in a position to say that the rate as charged was shown on the docket, or was something given back in the way of a rebate?—I do not know myself.

36489. You are not in a position to say?—No.

36490. What is the nature of the consignments which you send to these intermediate stations—Cormstown, Balbriggan, and so on?—Grates, iron goods, and so on.

36491. So that they do not suffer by any little delay in transit?—When people buy goods to-day they expect to receive them to-morrow.

36492. It is not a matter of importance whether you get a grate in your room to-day or to-morrow?—The public expect the goods the next day.

36493. What is the average weight of these consignments?—2 or 3 cwt.; there would not be much in them.

36494. Are there many consignments of 2 or 3 cwt.?—Not very many.

36495. You can hardly expect the railway company to be picking up half a dozen consignments of 2 cwt., and stopping the train?—The goods should be transferred, and lose no time, but they are not.

36496. Would not the natural answer of the railway company be that they charge as low a rate as they can afford to charge, on condition that the goods train is loaded up at Drogheda, and goes on to Dublin, and that if they had to stop at Balbriggan, Cormstown, and half-a-dozen other places, they would have to charge much higher rates?—It would be very inconvenient, no doubt.

36497. So that there is no great hardship in goods such as you describe having to go to Dublin and come back?—If they did not do that you would have to pay a higher rate; you admit that, do you not?—If they have to stop a train at half-a-dozen places and start again, that all means money?—I suppose it would.

36498. And the return which the railway companies at present earn not being a very large one would not admit of that?—It is a large one.

36499. At any rate, the stocks of the Great Northern Company are not very high; they have had a very serious fall in the last year and a half—something like 80 points. If they were obliged to stop for traffic such as you describe, in regard to which it is not very important whether it reaches its destination in twelve or twenty-four hours, they would be obliged to charge a higher rate?—Do you not think there is a great hardship about the passenger train service?—Is it not a great hardship that people living at Rush who want to go to Drogheda market are practically prevented from doing so by the way in which the trains are run?

36500. I understand that you have represented that matter to the railway company?—Yes. This man was on for years; it is off at present. They say that it does not pay, but if nine or ten trains in the day pay I think they should run one that does not pay, more particularly as the cost would be very small, because the train we want run on does come to Balbriggan, and stops there. If it came to Drogheda it would take those people back.

36501. At any rate, under existing conditions, if the railway company consider that it does not pay you cannot force their hands?—No.

36502. You have not stated in your abstract of evidence whether you would be in favour of amalgamation or any change in the existing system. You would probably hope, if there was any change, and there was a public authority constituted, that public convenience would be more considered?—Far more.

36503. And that would manifestly be in the interests of the trader and of the travelling public in the country?—Yes.

Colonel FLEMING.—The company did run this train for a considerable time, and the average number of passengers in one direction was under five, and in the other direction under six.

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

FIFTY-NINTH PUBLIC SITTING.—WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13th, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Office, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTIER, BART, Chairman; Right Hon. LORD FISHER, PC; Sir HERBERT JEKYLL, KCMG; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON POE, CR., Mr THOMAS SEXTON; and Mr. W. M. ADWORTH.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary)

Rev. W. SPOTSWOOD GERRER, c.z., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

36504. I think, Mr. Green, you are a member of the Congested Districts Board of Ireland?—I am a member of the Congested Districts Board, and I am also Chief Inspector of Fisheries for the Department of Agriculture.

36505. Is the fishery industry in Ireland an important one?—It is very important for the people of Ireland. The amount captured in Ireland of course cannot compare with the amount landed in Hull and Grimsby and other places; but in proportion to the population, and the amount invested in it, it is very valuable to the people of Ireland.

36506. Independent of what may be exported to England?—More than half the fish that are caught by Irish fishermen are sent to English markets.

36507. First of all, what are the principal functions of the Congested Districts Board?—The business of the Congested Districts Board is to develop industries in the congested districts with a view to relieving the constant difficulties with regard to distress that occurred in the West of Ireland. That is the reason why it was founded.

36508. Have they money at their disposal for that purpose?—They have.

36509. A vote?—They have to buy estates; and the purchasing and improving of those and re-distributing them amongst the tenants absorbs by far the greater part of the funds of the Congested Districts Board; but about £15,000 a year is set apart for the development of the fisheries.

36510. The fisheries are only a small part of their work?—Only a small part. At the beginning, when the Congested Districts Board was first established, the development of the fisheries occupied, I might say, the chief part of their work. It was later on that the other duties became of great importance.

36511. When was it established?—In 1882.

36512. Then I may take it that at any rate in the course of your inquiries as an Inspector of Fisheries, as well as a member of that Board, you have had brought under your notice the advantages of quick transit?—Certainly.

36513. And of improved railway facilities?—Certainly. It was one of the first things that occurred to us. When we began work my particular duty was to develop the fisheries, and one of the first things that we had to face was the question of transit.

36514. Chiefly of quick transit?—Of quick transit.

36515. Have you taken any interest in developing any railway with a view to developing that industry?—The funds of the Congested Districts Board are not sufficient to go into any railway work; but at the time when we began, Mr. Arthur Balfour, who was then Chief Secretary for Ireland, had just expended and was expending, I might say, a large sum in developing the railways of the West of Ireland, and it was owing to these new railways and extensions that some made at that time that the development of the fisheries, in which I was interested, became possible. Previously it was impossible.

36516. Are you of opinion that further extensions of the railways would further develop the fishing industry?—In certain districts it would.

36517. Have you got any districts in your mind?—The first one, of course, is the north corner of the County of Mayo. There is the harbour of Broad-

haven there, which is a fine harbour, and well situated with regard to fishing.

36518. Is it a natural harbour?—A natural harbour.

36519. And sheltered?—Sheltered, and quite safe when the boats are in. It is forty miles distant from the Midland Great Western Railway at Ballina and about twenty-four miles distant from the Malinbeg station of the Midland Great Western.

36520. The nearest station is twenty-four miles distant?—Twenty-four miles.

36521. From the harbour?—Yes; but not in a direct line. That is a round-about way of getting to it.

36522. What have your Board done in connection with these fisheries—how have they assisted in developing them?—Well, in the first place, as an illustration of what the general result is, I might describe the first thing that we attempted. Two years before the Congested Districts Board was started I was told off to make a survey of the fishing grounds of the whole of the West of Ireland, and I was for two years engaged in that, finding out in what directions and where the fishing could best be developed. Mr. Arthur Balfour arranged for that in conjunction with the Royal Dublin Society, and I was lent to the Royal Dublin Society to carry out that survey. Then I suggested that we should begin at the Arran Islands, off Galway, as they seemed very well suited for fishery development. The only fishing that was going on there at that time was carried on in about a dozen curraghs canoe fishing from those islands.

36523. How far was the fishing ground from there?—The fishing ground is within ten miles of the land, and there are 3,000 people living on the islands. The first difficulty we had was that there was no telegraphic communication. We represented that to the Government, and a cable was laid to the large island. We brought a hulk with ice in it and large fishing boats and crews from another part of Ireland—the east side of Ireland—to exploit the fishing. These men, with the seven large boats that they brought, made a very successful fishing of it, and that showed the islands that fishing was possible, which had to be demonstrated, or they would not have taken it up. Then we got boats built for crews on the island on the Fisheries Loan system, at a cost payable by instalments. Now there is a large fleet of large boats belonging to the island. In those early days the first difficulty was the want of telegraphic communication, then the fish that we caught had to go to the English markets. The Midland Great Western Company entered into the scheme very heartily, and offered us very good rates for sending the fish through.

36524. From Galway?—From Galway; but then we had to subsidize a steamer, and we still subsidize a steamer to run from the island to the town at Galway.

36525. The fishing boats caught the fish and landed it, and it went into the steamer?—The steamer brought the whole of it to the railway. The fish was all landed into the hulk with the ice in it. The fishing boats came alongside the hulk off the Arran Islands, and the fish was there packed, and the steamer took it off the hulk, and carried it to the railway.

Nov. 13, 1907.

Rev. W. Spotswood Gerrard, c.z., Congested Districts Board, Chief Inspector of Fisheries.

Suggested Railway extensions to aid the development of the fisheries.

Extension of the Midland Great Western Railway to Broadhaven (Co. Mayo) recommended.

Action of the Congested Districts Board in developing the Arran Islands fishery.

Telegraphic communication with the island established.

Boats built for the islanders on the Fisheries Loan system.

A steamer service established to convey the fish to the railway at Galway.

Nov 13, 1907.

Rev W. Sprotwood Green, C.M., Congested Districts Board, Chief Inspector of Fisheries.

Much prosperity has resulted to the inhabitants of the islands from the development of the fishery industry.

The co-operation of the Midland Great Western Railway in the matter of rates.

Development of the fishing industry at Cliggan.

Injury to the fish by the long cartage from Cliggan to Chichester Railway Station.

The fishings and seasons at the Arran Islands.

36526. What has been the result of that experiment?—The result has been that ever since the island has been making in some years £5,000 a year, and in others £3,000 by the fishing, and that in the last fifteen years it has brought thousands of pounds to the islands. Then the coast of Connemara took it up.

36527. Complete the first part of your story. The people there have now, at any rate, got some thousands of pounds which before that time they did not possess?—Oh, no. In some years now, I think, they have made quite as many pounds as they made shillings before.

36528. That's what I meant?—Yes.

36529. And therefore it has given, at any rate, a great prosperity to those islands?—Money has been circulated more or less through the whole population.

36530. A large number of persons are employed in this industry?—A large number of persons are employed in catching and packing the mackerel, and a curing trade has been started for the American market—started almost concurrently—and a good many hands have been employed in different years in curing mackerel for America.

36531. I gather that it could not have been done unless by the co-operation of the railway company?—It could not have been done without the co-operation of the railway company by giving its respectable rates.

36532. Not respectable, but cheap rates we will call them?—Rates that from our point of view were respectable.

36533. At any rate, there was, in that case, the co-operation of the railway company with the Fishery Department of the Congested Districts Board—all working together—and they developed a trade; and you think that similar facilities in other places might cause similar developments?—Oh, yes.

36534. Go on to the other places that you mention?—I have only taken that as our first start. We succeeded at the place where we started. We had greater difficulties later on. We began at the best place naturally, and where the facilities seemed to be the best. We then moved on to the west coast of Galway, where the Island of Beilín is, and the islands round that part of the coast seemed to offer the materials for fisheries, because islands, as a rule, are the best places. They are forced on to the sea whether they like it or not; but the men on shore need not go to sea, except when the weather is fine. We opened a station at Cliggan, on the west coast. That unfortunately was eight miles from the nearest railway station at Chichester. The delivery there had to be by cart, and the fish got a great deal of knocking about by being carted eight miles, so much so that though the fishing has succeeded there, it has succeeded against those difficulties. The fish boxed in Cliggan do not fetch the same price as the fish sent from Arran. There has been nearly always a couple of shillings a hundred cheaper for the Cliggan fish than for the Arran fish.

36535. Of course, you attribute that to the cartage?—To the cartage.

36536. The fish carted is not in so good a condition as the other?—That was one of the things that I wished to point out—whether very small catches on the line of communication might not make a great deal of difference in the possibility of developing a fishing.

36537. You mentioned mackerel; I suppose they catch other fish besides mackerel?—They catch herrings.

36538. It's a season business?—Yes; all these fishings are in their seasons. The fishing that goes on now round the Arran Islands—taking it as an illustration—is a certain amount of cod and ling. That is line fishing, and it goes on in the early spring of the year. Mackerel fishing begins in April, and goes on through May, and sometimes comes to an end in June or the beginning of July. Then there is a blank, during which the fishermen go to lobster fishing and herring fish. In September or October the autumn mackerel season begins. Between the two mackerel seasons the islanders take a good deal of herring. The autumn mackerel season is in full swing just now, and it goes on until Christmas. There are also twenty-five timbers at Galway.

36539. Sailing trawlers?—They fish in Galway Bay, and catch plaice and sole and turbot, and that kind of fish.

36540. Is that sent to Galway?—It is all put in at Galway, and sent away by train. Nearly all the fish sent into Galway goes away by train. Then, if you will allow me to go on a step further, we came to the place where we were stopped by the want of communication, where we tried and failed. We went on after a time to Blackhead Bay. There are a lot of very poor people living round Blackhead Bay, who were anxious to get into the fishing.

36541. Mr. Sprotwood?—It is north of Achill Island?—North of Achill Island.

36542. On the coast of Mayo?—The southern point of the Mulllet was the place where we started—a place called Blackhead Point.

36543. This would be the terminus of a proposed railway?—It is a place where it is said a great harbour is to be built. Well, we went there because we thought we could fish to the north of Achill, which we had left untouched, and we also wished to employ the very poor people living on the Mulllet and about the Innishowen islands lying off there. In order to get that fish away we anchored the bulk with the ice at Blackhead Point, as at Arran. We brought boats fully equipped with expert crews to go to fish from that place—to give a head of and demonstrate that fishing was possible. We began very well; but in order to get the fish away we had to charter a steamer to run the fish from Blackhead Point right on to Achill Sound, which is a big opening that goes in behind Achill Island up to the station, where the Midland Railway Company made a special siding for us.

36544. Chairman.—At Achill?—At a place called Tenragh, half way between Achill Sound and Malla-rann, which is the next station to the east. We had to buy the whole of that channel, and make a road up from it to the railway, and all the fish went that way. We had special trains occasionally to take the fish and join with the Galway trains at Achill and take the fish to Dublin at the North Wall, and by that route to the English market. Then the cost of that steamer was so out of proportion, and the difficulty of the transit and the cost of the transit was so out of proportion to the amount of progress that we were making in developing the fishing that we were obliged to drop it. We worked it for five years and then gave it up. It was hopeless, for all was going on at a loss.

36545. The cost was out of proportion to the value of the fish?—It was out of proportion to the progress we were making; and there were other things that we could spend the money on to more advantage.

36546. The chartering of the steamer ran away with all the profit?—Run away with all the profit, even if we had otherwise succeeded. But Blackhead Point was not as favourable as Broadhaven, which is away to the north of the Mulllet, and which was the place that we would have liked to fish from, but it is impossible at Broadhaven because there is no railway connection, and it is too far to get the fish by any means fresh to the trains. If we dealt with salt fish alone of course it would be possible; but when you are trying to develop the fishery and make large boats pay you must have all the fishings you can get. That's as far as that part of Ireland is concerned.—Continued.

36547. Those illustrations are sufficient?—There is one other point that I might perhaps refer to, and that is the great want of connection between the railways in Cork.

36548. You mean the various railways running through Cork?—Yes.

36549. There is no physical connection between them?—No physical connection. The fish that come from Baltimore, Kinsale, and other places has to be carted across Cork.

36550. Then I take it that you don't suggest at all that the railway company have stood in the way of the development of this fishing industry?—I could not say that they have.

36551. You went further—you said that the Midland, at any rate, had wanted you?—Well, according to the rates that we have we can send a cart of fish from the Arran Islands and from Galway and Chichester to Manchester for 2s. 3d.

36552. That seems very cheap?—But there are other difficulties that want attention.

36553. Do you mean as to other railways?—I have a note here—an account of a bill sent in the other

day to a man who sent herrings from Connemara to Glasgow. He sent thirty boxes of herrings from a station in Connemara to Glasgow, and he was charged £30 12s. 6d. freight on them. That, on thirty boxes of herrings, was a big freight—it was prohibitive.

35553. What rate is it per ton?—The exact weight was 1 ton 17 cwt.—about 26 per ton. Well, herrings would not pay at that, even in Glasgow.

35554. What railway serves Connemara?—The Midland Great Western.

35555. How do you account for that rate being so high as compared with the Galway rate?—I don't know, I am sure. Mr. Telford will be able to explain. One thing that strikes me is, that the railway rates we get for mackerel apply to the English towns, but Glasgow was not included in the scheme. It is outside the scheme. There are certain some mackerel off in England, and to any town inside each of these zones we have a special rate. It costs a good deal to send to or from London, but not much to send to Birmingham or Manchester, which are our principal markets.

35556. Mr. Scotter.—Is Glasgow a good market?—Glasgow is the best market for Irish herrings.

35557. Then a scheme which shuts out these fisher men from Glasgow is against the public interest?—Oh, yes, it is a disadvantage—shutting off the best market for herrings.

Mr. Telford.—I thought it would be rather unusual to send fish to Scotland. Our rates for fish comprise the whole of England, and we should gladly extend them to Scotland.

35558. Mr. Scotter (to witness).—Can you give the Commission an idea of the selling price of that consignment of herrings?—The fishermen must have been paid about 10s. a box for these herrings.

35559. That is, they got £15 altogether?—Yes.

35560. The freight then was more than two-thirds of the price obtained by the fishermen?—Yes.

35561. Chairman.—There must be something special about that, because there are more herrings caught round Scotland than in any other part of the world.—The West of Ireland herrings are especially good; and in the German market and the Russian market we have got year after year double the price for Irish herrings that is paid for others.

35562. Mr. Herbert Jellicott.—Do they come at a different time from the Scotch herrings?—No, the spring herrings come at about the same time as on the west coast of Scotland—that is, the Castle Bay fishery in the Hebrides is going on at the same time as the Donegal fishing, but the Donegal herrings are of a superior quality. The quantity is not so very large, but still we catch £30,000 worth in a year—in good years—and these herrings go to the Continent, and no one in England, Ireland, or Scotland would pay the same money for them.

35563. How do they go to Germany?—Across to Leith, and from Leith to Stettin and some other ports. They have been sent direct to Russia in steamers from the County of Donegal.

35564. Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—Is it a fact that the Irish herrings fetch 60 or 100 per cent. more than the Scotch herrings?—Yes.

35565. Chairman.—Are they sent fresh?—Light cured. They are sent in barrels packed in pickle.

35566. With regard to the Great Southern and Western and the Cork and Brandon lines, your suggestion is that it would be a great advantage to that particular industry if the stations of those lines were coupled up?—That is so.

35567. Perhaps there is some physical difficulty about it?—There have been several schemes for making a bridge across the Lee in Cork connecting those railways. Undoubtedly the existing state of things is a disadvantage. Small difficulties very often just kill the trade. If a train were able to run right through and there were no transhipping in Cork it would undoubtedly facilitate the trade. How much, it is difficult to say exactly.

35568. You have explained what has been done since 1880 in the development of the fishing industry. Is there any particular place where you think a light railway might be constructed with advantage, to develop a new industry in connection with the fisheries?—I think a railway to Broadhaven would develop new fisheries.

35569. Mr. Scotter.—Where would your field be?—

A railway to Belmont harbour at Broadhaven would be certain to develop new fisheries.

35570. That is, in connection with the Mullard line?—That is so.

35571. How far is that now from the nearest railway station?—It is forty miles to Ballina, but only about twenty-four to Malinbeg station.

35572. Mr. Herbert Jellicott.—Which would be the best connection?—That is a burning question. I don't exactly know what to say about it. What I did say about it when I was examined before the Parliamentary Committee was that whoever line would take the fish most quickly from Broadhaven to Manchester was the line that I would approve of. That's the whole thing we want—to get the fish in the shortest possible time from a certain place to a certain place.

35573. Do you wish to make any remark about railway rates generally?—I haven't gone into all the rates—in fact I had a great many things to do and I thought that some other person would take up the question of rates, some other witness. I only touched upon these few things. I know what the rates are on the Great Southern and Western down to fishing ports like Valentia and Fent. On some parts of their system they are a little higher than the Midland rates, and the distances they have to carry are greater.

35574. Proportionately they are about the same?—Proportionately. I don't say proportionately higher; but you can't get a box of fish, as far as I am aware, from Valentia, for instance, to Manchester for 2s. 3d., and you can get a box of fish from the most remote parts of the Midland system to Manchester for 2s. 3d.

35575. Is it a barrel of fish that you are talking about?—I am speaking of fresh fish—fresh fish sent in barrels. All the other fish are small compared with them, so far as the railways are concerned, it is the herring and mackerel fishings that have always been the most important in regard to quick transit.

35576. I don't know if you have given as the value of the fish exported to England or from Ireland?—The whole catch of sea fish on the Irish coast for the year 1895 is, roughly, £380,000 to £400,000 worth; and I think about two-thirds of it—at least that goes to the English market and to foreign markets.

Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—The exact value to the fishermen in 1905 was £414,000, and of that £205,000 was sent to Great Britain and other places.

35577. Chairman.—Nearly the whole of it. Now Mr. Gordon, what was it before that action took place with respect to fishing; have you any figures to give us before 1903?—I am speaking of the whole of Ireland. There were great fluctuations on the east coast fishing, and there was a great decline of the east coast fishing a few years before we started; so that if you take the whole of Ireland together—east and west—the figures do not vary so very much, because the east coast fishing declined very greatly, the herring fishing at North and Ardglass declined very greatly just before we started fishing in the west.

35578. I suppose that was one reason why you started?—Well the reason why we started was, that the whole of the west coast was practically a fallow field, and the people wanted to be shown how to make money.

35579. In fact it was to give employment to those poor people?—Yes, the railways made it possible in the west, and we made a good start, as the early years were particularly good.

35580. Do you see from your knowledge and experience, a possibility of any further development of the fisheries?—The supply of fish coming from the Irish fishing grounds has increased very greatly; but it doesn't enter into the statistics because the steam trawlers from England fishing all round the west of Ireland don't land their fish in Ireland.

35581. They take it direct?—To Fleetwood, etc.

35582. Steam trawling is comparatively recent?—Yes; it has been going on now for 15 years on a large scale. For the last ten years there has been a great increase in it, particularly on the west coast of Ireland. Steam drifting and steam trawling have tended to speed the markets for our kind of fishing. We can't get the same prices now that we did when we began.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Rev. W. Spence-Wood, Green, C.R., Comptrol District Board, Chief Inspector of Fisheries.

Proposed extension of the Mullard Great Western Railway to Belmont harbour at Broadhaven.

Fish rates on the Great Southern and Western Railway higher than on the Midland Great Western Railway.

The necessity for low rates and quick transit to develop the fishing industry.

Value of the Irish fish catch for 1905 and the export to Great Britain.

Decline of the Irish east coast fishing.

The effect of steam trawling on the Irish fishing industry.

Examined by Sir HERBERT JENKIN.

36582. Can the steam trowels fish where they like, or are they restricted?—The steam trowels are restricted from fishing in the bays and narrow waters in certain places; but they usually try to fish there. The places where they catch most of their fish are about twenty or thirty miles off the coast; but undoubtedly the development of steam trowels has tended to spoil the markets that we were catering for, and it is not easy to see—

36583. How you can stop it?—However, we can not expect to join in it. The only other part of Ireland where the railways have done a great deal of good is Donegal, where there are light railways.

36584. Those light railways, you think, have done a great deal of good?—They have done a great deal of good and they might have done more, if the railways had touched the places they were supposed to run to, but they generally stopped about five or six miles away from every place.

36585. What places have you in your mind?—Downings Bay and Sheephaven, which are great fishing places. The railway does not come within seven miles of it.

36586. The fish are carried seven miles?—Well, they mostly go by sea. The steamers take the fresh fish.

36587. And the railways lose the traffic?—Some go by rail. Kinsaleagh is a very rising herring fishing place.

Examined by Mr. SKEWES.

36588. After your long experience, Mr. Green, you must have a very special acquaintance with the coast of Ireland?—I think I have.

36589. I should think nobody, perhaps, has so good an acquaintance with it as you have?—I have been going about it for eighteen years officially, and all my life unofficially.

36590. Is there any need, in your opinion, for additional railway accommodation for the development of fishing on the East Coast?—Most of the places where any fishing can go on, are, I think, touched by the railways. Howth has its railway, and Ardara has its railway. There are fishing places up the coast, such as Portlough, in the County Down, that have not railway accommodation.

36591. There are places even on the East coast where branch lines might usefully be made?—There are.

36592. To what part of the coast of Ireland do you wish to be understood particularly to refer in connection with railway facilities for the development of fishing?—I was asked to come here by the Congested Districts Board. This Commission applied to the Congested Districts Board, and they asked me to come here. So that I have been speaking largely about the West coast. But we have been at times dealing with questions about the Arigna Railway, and all kinds of schemes in the Congested Districts that are not connected with fishing. There is one big scheme that I did not touch on, on the West coast—that of Limerick. I recommended it several times, and arrangements were nearly made to build a pier, and run a branch line down from near Westport to the sea-pier. We considered it would lead to a fishery development, and I considered that it would pay.

36593. I only ask you generally in relation to the coast line. It appears to me, on looking along the Western coast, that there are many inlets and likely places where the fishing still appears to be without railway accommodation?—Oh, certainly. I could name several.

36594. It is important that you should give us the benefit of your knowledge by naming a few of them?—The Kenmare River in the north of Kerry. It has excellent harbours, and if the railway were continued from Kenmare to Beshmore, it would touch most of them; and then the Congested Districts Board could erect small fishery lights as on other parts of the coast, and the fishing boats could fish out of those harbours and deliver their fish on the railway. I am not saying that such a railway would pay, but it would help to develop a fishery where we could not do so now. Ballycotton is another place.

36595. You are not limited to sea fishing?—I am limiting myself. I wish to add that at Ballycotton they are looking for a railway now.

36596. Small hitches in transit are great producers

of failure. The fish has to be sold fresh?—Some has to be sold fresh, and other fish has to be cured; but what has to be sold fresh is absolutely dependent on the railway.

36597. In the case of cured fish prompt railway communication is not of such great importance, but it is where fresh fish must reach the market in England or Scotland the next day?—It must reach it in forty-eight hours.

36598. So that it is almost essential in the case of fresh fish to have railway communication at the point at which it is landed?—Yes.

36599. It would appear then that for the purpose of this particular industry the transit system of Ireland requires a good deal of supplementing?—It does.

36600. The function of your Board is concerned, not merely with developing districts, but also with developing an industry like this among populations liable to chronic distress?—Yes; that was the idea of the Congested Districts Board.

36601. The fisheries had a more important part in the programme of your Board at the beginning than they have at present?—The Board has taken up largely the attention of the Board now.

36602. £10,000 a year is devoted to the development of the fisheries?—It is a fluctuating amount in the Congested Districts Board; it varies from year to year. I only gave that as a round figure. That expenditure means about £4,000 a year for instruction in fishing to the fishermen, because we are teaching the fishermen to fish, and we have to employ expert fishermen, and provide boats for them.

36603. That is an approximate annual sum—£10,000?—Approximate—yes.

36604. Is that smaller than the sum applied to this use in the early years of the Board?—Oh, no.

36605. When you said that the fisheries occupied more attention in the early years I rather inferred that perhaps there might have been more money applied in the early years?—I think it took up more of the time of the Board, because a great many schemes had to be considered, and we had to try and arrange schemes; but now the fishery business has got into a general train which it follows, and it is not so much a matter of discussing whether we will do this or do that, but laying down the lines upon which we have decided to develop regularly. It does not take so much time and so much consideration. We give a large number of votes, we arrange for instruction, and we have a very good system of supervision.

36606. I quite understand that in the course of years as administration progresses less time is required?—Less attention is required.

36607. But the points at which you operate are not very numerous, and the Western Coast population being generally liable to recurrent distress, there might be an extension of your labours usefully?—I have informally to take places as samples, and some of them are the more important ones, but we are operating at a great number of places between the places that are actually named. There are a great number of places that I have not named at all that we are working on, but the crews do not work always in those fishing places, in the creeks miles away, but they come in boats and collect at the centre when the fishing operations are going on, because the buyers come to certain known places, and the boats, though they may be owned in creeks remote from the centre, have to come there to market the fish.

36608. A sum of £10,000 a year, of which £4,000 is spent on administration seems to be a very minute provision for such an extensive need?—If we had Broadhaven ready, we would be able to spend a great deal more money there getting boats. There is one thing I should mention. When I began work I had to be fish merchant, fish cure, and everything; we bought the fish, cured it, sold it, and everything at the beginning. As soon as we had brought up the output at any one particular place we found the trade ready to come in, and now, as a matter of fact, the Board has not bought any fish for years. We were carrying at something like twenty thousand in the first five years; we are not carrying anywhere now at all, and that business has passed into the hands of the trade.

36609. It is done by private enterprise?—It is done by private enterprise; it is taken out of our

See, 13, 1907.

Rev. W. Sutherland, Glen, Co. Congested Districts Board, Chief Inspector of Fisheries.

The light railways in Co. Donegal have done much good to the fishing.

But the lines are situated too far from some of the fishing grounds.

Suggested railway extension on the east coast of Ireland to encourage the fishing industry.

Other desirable Irish railway schemes not connected with fishing.

Proposed line from Kenmare to Beshmore.

The necessity for railway communication due to fishing grounds.

hairs; we could not get buyers at first to come on the chance of getting some fish. Now at one place, Cloghan, there are nine firms of buyers, and when we began there was not one.

36612. Supply and demand operate?—Yes; and if the buyers would only fall out of office, there would be better prices.

36613. We know that all these Western counties are more or less congested, many districts scheduled, and also that the congestion is very much along the sea coast line?—It is.

36614. That would seem to indicate that the fishing might be almost indefinitely extended amongst those fishing on the sea coast with beneficial result?—One of the most disappointing things in the whole business is that the fish will not remain constant to any particular place. I could show you a return sent about Downings Bay. That was the place where most money was made, and where sometimes £30,000 was made by the fishermen in the year. This year that has been almost a complete failure; we have a large number of boats there now, and I have been getting returns of loss for the last month—a return of the catch of each boat—and it is all nil, nil, nil.

"Went out and caught nothing, the herrings do not come"; and those men are paying for their food and they are losing money by being in those boats, and if you get to a place where there is no more fish, or if the fish move off somewhere else, you cannot get the men to go on spending their time at it. We have put boats into the hands of men to try and get them to go fishing, and given them all the instructions we could, but still the moment the fish slack down, some will go away home, and leave the boats there, and there is no use going on under those circumstances. If the fish would only come in we are always prepared to have plenty of boats to catch them; but the difficulty of developing the fishing—undoubtedly the greatest difficulty of all—is that you may have fish at a place in great quantities for three or four years, then light years come, and the men cannot pay their way.

36615. We all know that the pursuit is in a measure precarious, but the fishing does go on?—It hangs on some way.

36616. From year to year along that coast?—There is another difficulty here in getting these men to move far away from their homes; they like fishing when the fish come to them, but they do not care to go on chance a hundred miles away and live in a lay amongst people they do not know, and perhaps not get any fish after all. A lot of Connemara men went off to Donegal last year, but they came back after some bad weather on the Donegal coast; some of the boats got driven ashore; they made no money, and they went home to Connemara. You would not get those men to go to Donegal this year—it is very lucky they did not, because the fishing has to this date been a failure.

36617. That would point to the importance of more railway accommodation, which might help to a wider choice of fishing grounds?—If we could provide that the fish would come in, it would solve the whole question.

36618. I was referring to the importance of having better accommodation and facilities not too far away?—Most certainly. What I think about Broadhaven is—I had very great belief in it as a very good place for fish for years; when they have not been anywhere else, we have seen great signs of fish over all that part of Mayo.

36619. I have not noticed that the output of fish from Ireland varies very much from year to year?—It does not vary very much. It is always something between 250 and 400.

36620. That works out at the annual average?—It does.

36621. If Irish fish is so good that it can be sold in Russia, the industry appears to be capable of very great expansion; at any rate it is not confined to any limited market; if you can get the fish to market you can sell them, due facilities being granted?—We cannot catch them in very great numbers at the time the fish is going at a very high price. If the class of fishing boat we use brings in about five or six cwt., it is considered a very fair night's fishing. I might say this—there are steam drifters coming to Downings Bay in the spring of the year from Scotland, and they catch more than the local boats, and now the Board has just decided that they must go

in for steam, and we have just placed an order for a boat—a steam drifter—for one crew at Donegal; they have done very well in their sailing boats, they have had two sailing boats and paid for them one after the other, and these men have applied, offering as their new boat back and their earnings—all that they can scrape together—if we will give them a steamer, so we have just ordered a steamer for those that will cost over £5,000 if they succeed we may have to go further.

36622. Chances?—And compete with the Scotch steamers?—Yes. When they start with a steamer they must push the Irish fishing as hard as they can, and then go to the Scotch fishing; they must go to Scotland, and probably to Tarnmouth.

36623. Mr. Serles.—Do you judge that with further transit facilities and favourable rates the Irish fisheries are capable of great expansion?—They are capable of expansion.

36624. Considerable?—Considerable expansion, but there is no use in forming the exaggerated view about the question that some people do.

36625. What are the railway rates that compete with the Irish fishermen to the markets to which his fish are sent. What are the markets chiefly in which the Irish fish is sold?—The Irish fish goes to the Midland towns chiefly of England—Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Sheffield, and all the big towns of Lancashire.

36626. What are the rates which compete with the Irishmen in that market. In other words, from what fishing points does the fish come that compete with him?—For mackerel, of course, we have not got very much competition except at Milford. At Milford there are a great lot of mackerel landed by steam drifters fishing out of Milford, and are landed direct there, but our fish has to go across to Milford—our fish from the South—Kinsale, &c.

36627. And also in the North, perhaps?—Then, if you go to Birmingham there is any amount of fish coming in there from Grimsby.

36628. Chances?—Not mackerel?—No, not mackerel, the places where the mackerel are caught are Cornwall, Milford, and the West coast of Ireland. There are only three places.

36629. Mr. Serles.—The rates that compete, therefore, with the Irish fish trade are the inland rates, not the rates from abroad?—No; inland rates. I may say that one reason why we never send Irish mackerel to Billingsgate is that we cannot compete with Cornwall. Cornwall can send mackerel into Billingsgate at rates that we cannot get them into Holyhead for, so that Billingsgate is practically shut out as a market from the places that we can get to.

36630. This Irish fish trade is prejudiced by the proportion between the through rates from the Irish fishing grounds to the market, and the rates from the English fishing grounds?—I think so, because we have a much longer journey; we have to cross the sea go across on the steamer, as well as two trains, and pay for the transhipping.

36631. The general complaint with regard to Irish exports is that the rates from abroad to England are very much lower than the rates from Ireland. Is this case the complaint is of a different kind, but it appears to have considerable force?—It has, but I have no reason to think that there is anything unreasonable in it because it is quite obvious, all things being equal, that fish could be run into London cheaper from Milford or from Cornwall than they could from the West of Ireland.

36632. No doubt, but I think even the most rigid political economists agree that nascent industries, and those that are trying to grow, may be fairly assisted, and if the Irish rates could be so modified as to give cheaper conditions of transit, of course it would be an advantage?—There is no great doubt about it at all. If we could get fish from the West of Ireland into Manchester at the same rate as from Milford, of course it would be the greatest possible advantage.

36633. Anything that would modify the Irish railway rates in the sense of reducing them substantially would powerfully help to develop the fisheries?—Every penny of the result would be in the fishermen's pocket.

36634. I do not think it could be put more forcibly than that?—It would enable the buyers to give a better price.

36635. Precisely, and the difference would go into

Nov. 13, 1907.

Rev. W. Symonds, G.P., Congested Districts Board, Chief Inspector of Fisheries.

The experiment of providing transit facilities on the Donegal coast.

English mackerel landed in the principal markets for the Irish fish.

English fishing at times that competes with Irish.

Irish mackerel that not from the London market owing to the shorter journey and low rate from Cornwall.

The probable effect of a reduction in rates on stimulating the fishing industry.

Reducing transit charges would benefit the Irish fishermen.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Rev. W.
Spencer
Grove, C.E.,
Congested
Districts
Board, Chief
Inspector of
Fisheries.

Suggested in-
crease in the
annual subven-
tion for the
fisheries in
Ireland.

The cost of
protecting the
fisheries in
Ireland.

the pockets of the fishermen and help to protect them against distress.—Ultimately.

36635. Do you think that this amount of £10,000 a year is sufficient, or that it might be usefully increased?—I think it might be usefully increased. We should spend it if we got it.

36636. I am sure you would spend it well? I hope so, I should say that, when we are speaking of this, we have money in the Department of Agriculture, too, for fisheries.

36637. Yes; how much did you get from the Department?—I have had to administer practically both.

36638. You are a member of the Congested Districts Board?—Yes.

36639. And an official of the Department?—Yes.
36640. How much do you get practically from the Department?—£10,000 a year is set-aside for sea fisheries, that is according to statute, out of the general fund, but that has to provide not only for development, but also to provide for the protection of the fisheries, and that is the heaviest item of all.

36641. Of the inland fisheries?—The sea fisheries.

36642. Against steam trawlers?—Against steam trawlers, and against anything that may come.

36643. You have to pay for that sea police?—We have to police the whole coast, congested or non-congested.

36644. What is the total income of the two bodies per annum, the Congested Districts Board and the Department?—The Congested Districts Board has changed so often that I forget; something over £100,000 a year.

36645. Then the Department's, I think, is about £300,000?—It is over £385,000 a year, I think.

36646. The Department's is a good deal more than that, is it not?

36647. Colonel Hutchinson Peck—Are you referring to the whole sum?

36648. Mr. Stokes—Yes.

Witness—I do not remember at the present moment what the figure is. All I know is that we have to deal with £10,000.

36649. The very poor agriculturists along the western coast, who have to fish as well as work in the fields, are deeply interested in the matter?—That may be.

36650. I think the two Departments together have the better part of a million a year between them, and I should think that an annual subvention of £10,000 to £20,000 for the fisheries is a very inadequate provision. Of course you as an official do not care to pronounce upon this; but you have said that it might be usefully increased?—It might be usefully increased.

36651. I want to ask you one other question. You have made loans to the fishermen along the western coast for boats and nets?—Yes.

36652. And in other parts of the country?—On the whole coast of Ireland we have made loans.

36653. All round the coast. Careless and unjust observations are so often made that I should like to ask you, as an official, what is your opinion of the integrity of the borrowers in regard to their desire to repay these loans punctually and fully?—Previous to the establishment of the Congested Districts Board we were dealing with loans all round Ireland, and as Inspector of Fisheries I was dealing with my share. For forty years loans have been issued to the poor fishermen all round the whole coast of Ireland, and the loss on bad debts was less than 10s in the £100—it was less than $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

36654. On the whole loans service?—On the whole business our bad debts came to less than $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

36655. Through the borrowers were subject to recurrent pressure of want and even of hunger?—I said, before the Congested Districts Board was started, that was the result; I could not say it was so with regard to the work of the Congested Districts Board at all now, because we are losing more money than that on bad debts for this reason, that we, in developing the fishing, had to take a much greater risk; we had to give out very expensive boats and gear. If we were going to develop fishing, we had to run the risk of giving very inefficient crews very expensive boats and gear, and it is only a small proportion after all, but in a small proportion of places they have failed to work the boat to a profit, and have failed to repay, and we have had to take away the boats, and where

we take away the boat and sell her again we lose probably a hundred or a couple of hundred pounds on the transaction, so that the losses in loans that have been made by the Congested Districts Board are far greater—they might come to 5 per cent.

36656. The avocation is precarious?—Yes.

36657. Do you trace the failure to repay to the want of inclination, or to pressure of circumstances?—To pressure of circumstances entirely.

36658. These poor people are determined to pay if they can, and do pay if they can?—Oh, they pay if they can.

36659. About railway development, it appears that there are a great many branches and minor lines that require to be made. You are probably acquainted with the course of finance in relation to these light railways, and you know what has been done. Let us take a retrospect for a moment. First, private capital built the lines; then, about forty years ago it was found necessary to have financial guarantees; then there were joint local and Treasury guarantees, then the Treasury guarantee had to be looked up by grants, and now grants are not made except out of the Irish Development Fund which, we understand, is exhausted by the Land Purchase Act?—It is a fact that some people jumped too soon, and made their railways before they got the advantages.

36660. But even so, the course has been that new and more public funds have had to be voted for the construction of these lines and financial guarantees are scarcely now forthcoming. The Treasury have shut down, and there are no grants except from the Irish Development Fund, which, we know, is exhausted; under these conditions, do you think it hopeful that each district should still be left to push for its own line without giving any guarantee, and to ask the Treasury to construct the line, and assume liability for loss on working expenses?—Think when you have Consols down to 81, or something of that sort, it is not a good plan to ask the Treasury to do too much in that line.

36661. Even before Consols were so low, they seemed to have given up the policy of grants to Ireland for railways?—I am quite with you that Ireland requires more railway facilities than it has, and it does not seem at all likely that all these railways will be commercially successful—I mean to say, so successful as to induce private capital to come and make them.

36662. Do you think it desirable that there should be some authority in Ireland with resources which could deal with these several lines upon their merits and without laying a local burden instead of leaving each district in the futile task of going to the Treasury, and asking it to assume responsibility?—That is a question I am hardly prepared to answer; that is rather beyond me.

36663. Would it be more likely to produce the line?—I think even that question is beyond me, too.

36664. You prefer to keep to the sea.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Peck.

36665. I should just like to ask you one or two questions about the funds at your disposal. I think the fund which was subsequently transferred to the Congested Districts Board was the remnant of a fund that was originally started for the relief of distress in 1822 or somewhere about then?—That is so.

36666. Subsequently that fund was transferred to the Board of Works?—Yes.

36667. And in 1861 it was transferred to the Congested Districts Board?—Yes.

36668. I think the figures before me show that some thing like £75,000 was given to the Congested Districts Board, and subsequently the remainder, the balance of £20,000, was given to the Department?—Yes.

36669. What I was going to ask you was, was that £75,000 earmarked for the purposes of sea-fisheries, or did it go into the general funds of the Congested Districts Board to be available for any purpose?—It was available for any purpose, but it was desirable that it should be.

36670. That is the point; as a matter of fact, has any of it been spent on purposes other than sea fisheries?—Some has been spent on other purposes.

36670. I understood you to say that, roughly, speaking, you had an annual grant from the Congested Districts Board of £10,000 for the purpose of sea fisheries?—No for the Department we have.

36671. I know about the Department; I want to see the two apart?—The money allocated for sea fisheries in the Congested Districts Board is out of the general fund.

36672. That is the point I want to get at. You have no specific annual sum earmarked for sea fisheries?—No.

36673. Even of that £75,000, which is the remnant of the fund originally allocated or intended to be provided entirely for the purpose of sea fisheries, I gather you have hardly spent the full amount, apart from any other grant that was given in 1881?—We spent some of that that had accumulated at the time on piers; the Congested Districts Board have not looked upon that fund as in any way the best of their expenditure one way or another, but out of their general fund they have repaid over and over again, whenever money they took out of it for building the piers at the beginning.

36674. Of course, £75,000, spread over about sixteen years, would represent about £5,000 a year?—Yes.

36675. Have you spent more than that from first to last—an annual sum of £5,000 or £6,000 a year for the purpose of sea fisheries?—Yes, we have, certainly.

36676. Then the Department has an annual sum of £10,000, plus the £25,000, transferred from the original fund, by the Board of Works, in 1864, and which, at that date, was, I believe, represented by a sum of about £30,000?—That is so.

36677. So that really they have, looking upon that £30,000 as a capital sum, the interest on that as well as the £10,000 a year?—They have, but that goes back into the fund; it does not go to anything else.

36678. For the purpose of sea and inland fisheries?—For the purpose of the fishery loans.

36679. At any rate, for purposes connected with sea and inland fisheries?—Sea fisheries, not inland, none of that money is available for inland.

36680. But out of what fund do the Department make the grants which are given annually to the Inland Fisheries?—The General Endowment Fund.

36681. It does not come out of this other fund?—To get money for inland fisheries we have to go to the Agricultural Board, who are responsible for voting the money out of the General Endowment Fund, and ask them to vote for any scheme that we have as regards inland fisheries—salmon fisheries.

36682. So that none of this interest on the £30,000, or the annual sum of £10,000 goes to the inland fisheries at all?—No.

36683. You work in conjunction with the Department as regards fishery duties?—Yes, my duty for the Department is as to fisheries. I am Inspector of Fisheries, as the Fisheries Branch of the Department, and I am a member of the Congested Districts Board.

36684. We have had some evidence here as to the want of protection and difficulty in getting grants for the purpose of inland fisheries. I remember one gentleman giving evidence, from Limerick, about the Shannon Fisheries, and speaking about the difficulty of getting grants, and so on, I questioned him, and I think he must have misunderstood, because he seemed to think that the Department had no power either in the way of grants or anything else. That is a mistaken idea altogether?—It is a mistaken idea so far. As a matter of fact we have tried over and over again to get the people on the Shannon to start hatching salmon.

36685. You turned out a great quantity of salmon and trout fry, did you not?—We have a great number of salmon hatcheries all over Ireland subsidised by us, or designed by us—the buildings put up by us—and we wanted to do it on the Shannon. We could get no people on the Shannon to combine and fall in with the scheme. The scheme works very well on other rivers, the Shannon is the only one where we cannot get anybody to take it up.

36686. The returns of the Department show something like eight millions fry put out by the various hatcheries—where were those principally put?—They were put in a great number of rivers. The biggest hatchery we have is on the Blackwater, that is turning out about 2,000,000 a year, and there is one on

the Boyne, and one on the Erne, and one on the Bann, and a great number of small ones—a dozen—on the smaller rivers.

36687. I think as a rule the Department make it a condition when they are considering the question of making grants to these different inland fisheries that the local Boards of Conservators should also contribute something?—Some local persons must contribute something.

36688. Can you say whether they sometimes find a difficulty in getting local authorities or individuals to contribute their quota?—In the rivers where we have the hatcheries of course we have not found any difficulty, but these are rivers where we would like to have hatcheries, such as the Shannon, where we have found it impossible to get anybody to contribute anything locally.

36689. My reason for asking was that in reading the Department's return on Inland Fisheries, I gathered that several grants which they were perfectly willing to make to those different inland waters had fallen through owing to the conditions which they think it necessary to impose as to certain monetary contributions from the district not having been fulfilled?—That is the only thing which stops us. We are willing to put up hatcheries wherever we get the scheme adopted, and in many rivers it has been adopted; in others it has not.

36690. Do you think the present Boards of Conservators of Inland Fisheries act as enterprising as they might be in trying to develop those fisheries to the fullest extent?—In some rivers they are, in some they are not; they differ greatly. There was a Bill brought in last year before the House to re-constitute the Boards of Conservators, but it did not pass, and it was rather doubtful, I think. At any rate, it might come in again, so I really do not care to say anything about it.

36691. At any rate there is room for improvement, I gather from your answer, in the way in which the Boards of Conservators exercise their duties?—Yes.

36692. I suppose you have read the Reports just issued by the Departmental Inquiry into the Department's working?—Yes.

36693. At present there is a power given under the Act by which District Councils can have representation on the Boards of Conservators, provided that they make a monetary contribution; but the Commissioners go further, and say that quite apart from their making any contribution they consider it would be in the interests of the public if these bodies were given direct representation on the Board of Conservators. Do you agree with that?—I think it is desirable that the County Councils should have some representation on the Boards of Conservators; but the scheme at present in existence would mean that numerous Boards of Conservators would be constituted, and nearly all District Councils.

36694. I don't quite understand you?—For instance, if the present law was acted on, in the Shannon there would be a Board composed of 125 or 127 County and District Councillors on the Board of Conservators, and twelve people interested in the fisheries.

36695. Of course that would not answer?—The law wants altering. There ought to be some reasonable way to enable County Councillors to be represented on the Boards without swamping the fishery interests.

36696. At present they cannot have any voice unless they make a monetary contribution?—That is so.

36697. But, assuming that the law was altered in that respect, you say it would be necessary to restrict the number by which they would be represented?—Certainly.

36698. Subject to that restriction, you think it is desirable, and would probably be attended with beneficial results if they were represented?—I think so.

36699. Can you give us any idea of the value of the inland fisheries—the output for the year—or money value?—It is extremely difficult to collect statistics about the inland fisheries, because the owners of fisheries do not seem to give us their figures, for various reasons; many of them are tenants, and do not wish to let it be known that they are making too much, or their rent might be raised, and for various reasons it is impossible to get accurate statistics of the salmon fisheries, but by reference to the account carried by the railways, and various other sources, we consider that the value of the salmon fisheries in Ireland is about equal to the sea fisheries.

Nov 13, 1907,

Rev. W. Spence-Wood, Green c.c., Congested Districts Board, Chief Inspector of Fisheries.

Location of the salmon hatcheries provided by the Department of Agriculture.

A local contribution to the cost of such hatchery necessary.

The existence of an association of the Boards of Conservators of Fisheries.

Some representation of the County and District Councils on the Boards of Conservators desirable.

The value of the salmon fisheries in Ireland equal to that of the sea fisheries.

Apr. 18, 1947.

Rev. W. Spence
Quinn, 41,
Cavanagh
District
Board, Chief
Inspector of
Fisheries

The transport
of inland fish
carried over the
Irish rail-
ways in 1935.

The public
right of
salmon fishing
in fresh tidal
waters

The Scotch
salmon
fishermen
preparatory

Suggested
allocation of
£5,000 a year
of the Depart-
ment of Agri-
culture's funds
to develop the
salmon
fisheries

Increased
traffic in the
railways would
result

Cheap railway
rates and rapid
transport is
essential for
the encourage-
ment of these
fisheries

Enquiries
checked by the
interests of the
fishing in-
dustry on the
Donegal
Coast.

36702. On the basis of the returns for 1935—how much?—It is £400,000 a year.

36703. They give the quantity of inland fish carried over the Irish railways for 1935 as 1,402 tons?—Yes.

36704. While we are on that point, you mentioned that some of the basins of these rivers were rather designed to give information; that raises a point that was rather questioned some time ago. I put it to one of the witnesses giving evidence that the public in Ireland had considerable rights in the tidal waters; he rather questioned that, and said that he had never heard of any right of that kind?—It is a very important point in understanding the salmon fisheries of Ireland. I did not know you were going into it. It is a very important point to remember that in Ireland there is a common law right of salmon fishing which there is not in Scotland.

36705. Quite so?—Of course Scotland is the other salmon country. England is not very much of a salmon country; Scotland and Ireland are the two great salmon districts. In Scotland all the salmon fisheries are privately owned or belong to the Crown—are proprietary—but in Ireland, once you get to the tidal flow, all the salmon fisheries belong to the public, they are public property, with the exception of a few "several" fisheries here and there, where somebody has been given a grant; but those are exceptional cases.

36706. The fact that the public have such large rights in Ireland, which they have not got in England and Scotland, justifies the granting of public money for developing that industry, which would not be justifiable in the case of developing an industry in the interests of private people?—I quite agree with that; and I may say that when the Department's Act was being framed, I suggested that on account of this large public right of salmon fishing in Ireland, if there ought to be £10,000 a year for sea fisheries, there certainly ought to be £5,000 a year allocated to developing the salmon fisheries. I think people have so often got into their heads that salmon fisheries are private property that the thing was omitted. Undoubtedly it is a most valuable asset in Ireland, and an asset which is being more and more realised every year. Those people on the north coast of Mayo—Breadhaven—last year (those poor communities there along that coast), were paid £5,000 in six weeks for the salmon caught in the sea, and caught under their common law right just as they catch sea fish.

36707. I am very glad you have made that point, because I suppose that if such a sum of money were expended in the development of these fisheries it would indirectly tend to give a considerable amount of traffic to the railways, and benefit them, quite apart from the benefits conferred upon the fishermen?—Practically all the salmon travel on the railways, so that any development there would lead to the development of railway traffic. Means of communication are absolutely necessary for the salmon fishing. There was a special arrangement made this year for carrying those salmon from North Mayo during those six weeks to the railway at Blyth.

36708. Have you any remarks to make as to the facilities afforded by the railway companies with regard to the transport of salmon and other inland fish—are they satisfactory?—I do not think the rates for salmon are as good as the rates for sea fish, but there may be private arrangements with some of the large salmon factors that I do not know of.

36709. From your knowledge of the subject, do you think that if they were reduced a certain amount it would be desirable in the interests of these fisheries?—I should like to see the railway rates on all fish reduced, but of course if the engines are going to get coal put into them, the companies must get money somehow or other to buy it.

36710. But relatively speaking, you consider the rates for inland fish are higher than those for sea fish?—

36711. Chairman.—He does not know that.

Witness.—I have not said that, because I am not certain about the arrangement that some of the salmon factors have with the railway companies. A great many of these things are matters of private arrangement.

36712. Colonel Hutchinson P.C.—When you spoke of the large increase of salmon fishing on the coast,

was that in reference to the salmon drift-net fishing?—Yes.

36713. That is of quite recent growth?—That has been going on for a great number of years on a very small scale, but the recent development on a large scale has only been going on for five or six years.

36714. In some parts the growth of that industry has been the means of attracting emigration in country districts?—It has on the Donegal coast, and, together with the herring fishery has caused many people to return from America, who had emigrated.

36715. With regard to the sea fisheries, you spoke of its being desirable to make some short extensions to Breadhaven, Cloggan, and other districts; I think you also said you did not see much prospect of those extensions being in themselves remunerative. Quite apart from the question of such lines being profitable, may I say, at any rate, that they would very materially increase the comfort and conditions under which the people in these poor districts at present live?—The districts in which railways run have immensely improved since the railways have been made; all kinds of traffic have developed—the passenger traffic; the advance of civilisation in the country has been promoted by the extension of railways, and undoubtedly it is most important, where a country is so poor and so remote as the north corner of Mayo, that it should be brought into touch with the rest of the country, even if the cost of the line was a loss to the State.

36716. Am I right in saying that the conditions under which the people on that western seaboard generally—the Beshaven district, and others live—are necessarily from the circumstances of the land and of the soil, very poor?—They are very poor.

36717. And that any little thing which could add to their incomes—their earnings—in the shape of sea fisheries and so on—would perhaps in many instances make all the difference between poverty and comfort?—It would.

36718. You are, of course, aware that a number of railways were made in the West of Ireland especially, for the purpose of opening up districts, and improving the conditions under which the people in those live. I gather that in your opinion many of those railways stop short just at the seaboard. If it were justifiable to make those railways in the interests of what we will call, for the sake of argument, the inland districts, would it not be equally justifiable to extend them a little farther, in the interests of the people who live on the seaboard, and whose conditions of life are probably worse than those of their neighbours a few miles inland?—Certainly; of course there may be reasons why it does not suit the railway companies to come to the sea.

36719. I am not asking that the railway companies should do it, but if the Government thought it desirable to spend money and make grants for the construction of those light railways, do not you think it is also desirable on their part to extend them in the case of those short extensions, so as to bring them to the sea-board?—I certainly think it is quite a legitimate expenditure.

36720. We have often had it urged as an objection to starting industries in Ireland that so long as you specified these they do well enough, but as soon as the measures of State aid are taken away, they fall into decay. I gather from your remarks and from your experience in the case of sea fisheries, that objection does not hold good at all, and that when once started, private enterprise comes forward, and the industry stands on its own feet?—That is so.

36721. That is what I gather from your remarks?—That is a fact.

36722. Chairman.—You stated that as a fact?—Yes. In some districts where we have spent money in developing the fishing, the fishing now goes on, and we are not spending money any more.

36723. Colonel Hutchinson P.C.—That is, of course, satisfactory, and it is a pity it does not apply to other industries in Ireland. At any rate, that being the case, public money can be more justifiably spent where there is a prospect of an industry after a few years being self-supporting?—I think so.

Mr. Farlow.—Might I make one remark now as to the fishing which Mr. Green said fell under a general scale. I would just like to point out that the rate from Achill or Tourage is the same low rate as from Galway, although the distance is over 200 miles to Dublin compared with 158 from Galway.

36728a. *Chairman*.—He said all the stations on the Midland Great Western were practically the same.
 Mr. Tullow.—I do not think he mentioned that Ashill or Torrington was the same as Galway.

Witness.—All the stations that are involved in the group system have equal rates.

36729 Mr. *Scott*.—You attributed failure in some cases to the want of direct railway communication?

Mr. Tullow.—The railway communication at Torrington is close at hand, in fact down at the Bay.

36730. *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—Just one question on the rates. I think you said that the rates for fish on the Great Southern and Western were rather higher than on the Midland Great Western? I have not got the figures by me now. I think the rates from Fenit or Valencia to Manchester are higher than from Clifden.

36731. Has any representation ever been made to the Great Southern and Western on that point?

Mr. *Oraker Borloughes, Solicitor*.—The distance is ever so much greater.

36732a. *Chairman*.—I think, Mr. Green said that proportionately the rates were about the same; the rates were higher, but the distance was greater.

36733. *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—I understood him to say that, the conditions being the same, the rates were higher.

Witness.—No, I said the distance is greater.

36733a. Mr. *Scott*.—From the point of view of a

fisherman sending his fish to the same market as a man who sends his fish a shorter distance, the fact that the distance is greater does not make him better able to pay the higher rate.

36734. *Colonel Hutchinson Peck*.—Am I right in saying that all the ports right away from the North of Scotland round the East Coast, are grouped together for the purpose of the fish traffic?—I think they are.

36734a. From Aberdeen, right away round to Peterhead, Dundee, and so on. Is there anything of that kind with regard to the Irish ports—any grouping?—Yes, there is in the Midland Great Western. I have just been saying that there is this—whether you send a box of fish from Galway, which is quite a short distance from Dublin, or Clifden, which is fifty miles farther, or Ashill, which is 100 miles farther, the whole thing is grouped; that is, the towns in England are grouped, there is a zone marked off, and you can send to any town inside that zone for the one figure.

36735. Does not grouping apply to ports on the south-west coast of Ireland—Valencia, and those other places?—The rates from Valencia to Manchester would be in one zone too, I take it. There are certain zones.

Mr. Tullow.—They are all grouped in zones; you may take that as applying generally to Ireland. The fish stations are in two or three groups.

Mr. MICHAEL ARDENT, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

36736. I think you are the Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Donoughmore Extension Railway?—Yes.

36737 You are also a member of the Cork Rural District Council?—Yes.

36738. What is the length of that line?—6½ miles.

36739 What is the capital?—£30,000.

36740. And is that one of the guaranteed lines?—Yes.

36741. What is the guarantee?—Four per cent.

36742 What proportion is borne by the barony and the Treasury?—Two per cent. by the Treasury, and two by the barony.

36743 It is equally borne by the baronies and the Treasury?—Yes.

36744. When was the line opened?—In 1885.

36745. Was all the capital spent on it?—Yes, all the capital was spent.

36746. What is your working stock?—One engine, two carriages, and fourteen wagons—open wagons.

36747. Who works the railway?—The Cork and Muskerry Railway Company work it by agreement.

36748. Is that another light railway?—That is another light railway.

36749. But a larger one?—It is about 12½ miles.

36750. Then it is longer than yours?—The Donoughmore is only 6½ miles; the other is 12½.

36751. And it is worked by that Company?—Yes.

36752. What is the agreement? Is it worked on a percentage basis?—It is worked per train mile, the actual cost.

36753. Is there a profit or a loss in working it?—There is a loss in working the Donoughmore so far. I can give you the receipts for the year after it started.

36754. We will get to that directly. What do you mean by "through bookings divided on mileage"?—That is between the Donoughmore and Muskerry line.

36755. That is for passenger fares?—And for goods as well.

36756. No terminal charges allowed at either end; it is all done by mileage?—All done by mileage.

36757. You had better just give us the receipts for the line, because questions may arise upon them. Just take 1884?—The receipts that year were £1,085, and the expenditure was £1,800. Then in 1905, that was last year, the receipts were £1,364, while the expenditure was £1,842.

36758. The expenditure being the cost of working?—Yes. The cost of maintaining the line, of course.

36759. Yes; but you said this other company worked it at the actual cost?—Yes.

36760. Then, the other Company maintain your line, do not they?—They run the trains open it, and they run those trains at the actual cost of working them.

36761. Who does the maintenance, do you?—Yes, the Donoughmore Company.

36762. Mr. *Scott*.—I think you say the repairs are worked out on the train mileage?—Yes. The whole thing is done by the Muskerry Railway; in that way the repairs are done by them.

36763. *Chairman*.—That is what I say; the line is worked and maintained by the Muskerry Company at actual cost; the actual cost is the figures you give, £1,842 for 1905?—Yes.

36764. Therefore there is a deficiency of £500, about?—Something like £400.

36765. How do you meet this deficiency?—By a tax on the barony.

36766. What does that mean to the ratepayers, do you know? How much in the pound have they to pay?—There are two acres in the inner area, which is supposed to be the most benefited, it costs nearly a shilling in the pound to the ratepayers; in the other, about sevenpence, I think.

36767. And that goes on year by year, and is likely to go on, I suppose under this agreement?—It is very likely to.

36768. How much have the baronies contributed to the working and maintenance of this line since the line started?—£4,436 2s. That is the deficiency in working.

36769. That is what I said. What is the amount that the baronies have contributed towards the deficiency in the working and maintenance?—£4,436 2s.

36770. Do you think that any improvement will take place either in receipts or by increasing the receipts or decreasing the expenditure, if certain improvements are made on that railway?—I do.

36771. What are the improvements that you suggest?—There were several pretty sharp curves along that line—in fact, 14 miles and 3½ miles—that is, on certain curves—and the speed has to be reduced there to twelve miles an hour; if we could remove those curves, we would, of course, be able to increase our speed. At present, if we want to run at the ordinary rate, we would be in great difficulties going over that.

We fancy it is quite possible to develop the monthly fares there if we could run heavier trains and go at a greater rate of speed.

36772. Have you ready any estimate as to what that would cost?—About £5,000.

36773. With regard to ballasting the line, what do you suggest?—There is no ballast put whatever on this line, and we have to draw it from the Muskerry Company, a distance of seven or eight miles, before it reaches the Donoughmore line at all.

36774. And of course you have to pay for it?—Yes.

36775. Suppose there was a stone-crushing plant in your district, have you plenty of stone there?—

Nov. 13, 1907.

Rev. W. J. Spalding, Green, &c.,
 Coopers, &c.,
 Black, Chief
 Inspector of
 Fisheries.

The Irish
 ports grouped
 for fish rates
 in a number
 cases to the
 Scotch

Mr. Michael
 Ardent, J.P.,
 Chairman of
 the
 Donoughmore
 Extension
 Light
 Railway.

Donoughmore
 Extension
 Railway.

Deficit in the
 working
 expenses for
 year 1905.

The postage
 incurred by
 the baronies

Total baronial
 contribution
 since the
 opening of
 the railway.

Suggestion as
 to improve-
 ments in the
 construction
 of the railway.

Estimated
 cost.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Mr. Michael Aherne, J.P., Chairman of the Donoughmore Extension Light Railway.

Donoughmore Extension Railway.

Prospect of an increased traffic if the improvements were carried out.

Mr. T. O'Connor, Secretary, Cork and Muskerry and Donoughmore Extension Light Railways.

Proposed construction of the Donoughmore line by the contractor.

The railway constructed under the Transport Act of 1885.

Worked by the Cork and Muskerry Company.

All these curves are caused by rocks protruding, and we could cut off the rocks and amend the stone for the purpose of general. There is nothing under the sleepers, they are laid on the rails, and if we could lay proper sole sleepers, a very small amount of ballast would do it, and we fancy we would save very much in that way. Of course if these curves were removed, the wear and tear of the rolling-stock would be very much reduced.

36766. Talking of this suggested improvement, what is the total amount which you consider necessary to keep up the line in decent working order?—About 25,000. I should like to say in connection with this table that it is quite possible, considering the district through which this line runs, which was completely land-locked before this line was made—it was twelve miles away from the nearest fall—if we were able to carry heavy trains along the line

it would develop the lime industry. The Department of Agriculture are recommending lime for top-dressing; and the farmers asked us to bring it on to them, and we cannot very well do so at present, because we cannot haul heavy trains along on account of these curves—a long train would have its head on one curve and its tail on another, and the strain and friction is very great.

36767. It is the old story. Were you connected with this in the beginning; when was the line made?—1833.

36768. Were you connected with it in the beginning?—Not at the beginning.

36769. Who made the line?—The promoters.

(At this point the examination of Mr. Aherne was suspended, and evidence was given by Mr. T. O'Connor, Secretary of the Cork and Muskerry and the Donoughmore Extension Railways.)

Mr. T. O'Connor examined by the CHAIRMAN.

36770. Was there an understanding that the Cork and Muskerry Company were prepared to construct the line?—There was not.

36771. Then, as a matter of fact, I suppose during the construction of the line they exercised a certain amount of supervision?—The Cork and Muskerry Company did not.

36772. Even though they were going subsequently to take it over and work it. Then the supervision of the line during construction, I suppose, was left to the gentlemen who were appointed by the Grand Jury to look after their interests?—That is so.

36773. And whom did they appoint?—The Grand Jury did not appoint anybody but the County Surveyor. He had power to supervise the whole thing. Then the promoters had their own engineer. They asked upon their own engineer to see the thing carried out properly.

36774. At any rate, the County Surveyor, on behalf of the Grand Jury was supposed to see that the works were carried out according to the specification?—Yes.

36775. Did he do so? You have no complaint to make that the line was not constructed according to the plans and specifications and subject to the supervision of the Board of Works. We have had evidence with regard to another line of its not having been constructed according to the specifications, and of great difficulties having arisen in consequence of that departure?—I believe the curves were allowed to be put in sharper than they were originally intended.

36776. When you say originally intended, do you mean there was any departure in respect to curves from the specification, or simply a fault in the original specification which subsequent experience brought to light?—I could not say, sir.

36777. The Cork and Muskerry line, I think, is one of the few light railways in Ireland that does fairly well?—Yes.

(Examination of Mr. Aherne, J.P., resumed.)

Mr. AHERNE examined by Colonel HUTCHESON POE.

36778. Yours is one of the light railways that does fairly well?—It does.

36779. Its proportion of working expenses is only 79 per cent., and there are few in a similar condition?—Yes.

36780. Has the suggestion ever been put to them that they should contribute towards making good some of the defects which you have pointed out—they do not incur a very great expenditure?—No, I do not think so.

36781. The matter has never been put before the Cork and Muskerry people?—No, they did not consider they had any liability in the matter.

36782. The Donoughmore line is under a Committee of Management?—Yes, appointed by the County Council.

36783. What does the Committee of Management consist of?—Six members.

36784. And are they responsible for the working of that line?—They are, to a certain extent; they supervise it.

36785. Chairman.—The Muskerry Company work the Donoughmore Extension?—Yes.

36786. Colonel HUTCHESON POE.—And I suppose the Committee of Management exercise a certain amount of responsibility and control as to the working of that line?—Yes.

36787. Have they any technical knowledge of railway matters?—I would not say they have technical knowledge; they have general knowledge.

36788. Has there been any improvement in the receipts of the line, or any economies in the working expenses since they undertook the control of it?—There has been a great improvement in the receipts for the first half of the present year.

36789. I was not referring to any particular year because the railway has been under their control for a considerable number of years?—Eight years. I have not those figures.

36790. I take it from the returns that we have here that there cannot have been very much improvement, because the average annual deficit on working expenses has been about £260 a year?—It is more and more every year, because the sleepers are all wearing out now.

36301 Of course if those sleepers had been properly put down in the first instance their life would still be good for some time?—Yes.

36302 At paragraph 11 on your proof you say the Treasury contribution amount to £17,011. I think that must be a clerical error?—The baronet and the Treasury.

36303 That is more like it. You repeat it twice.
36304 I should have thought it would have been even more. Has there ever been any profit on the working of that line?—No.

36305 If you take the maximum guarantee for which the Treasury are liable—which, I think, is £100 a year—2 per cent on £30,000. Is not that so?—Yes.

36306 As far as I can make out, there has never been a profit on that line, and they have paid that £100 a year every year since 1893?—1896?—Yes.

36307 Was not the line opened in 1893?—Yes.

36308 Was there any profit then?—No. They have paid it time after time.

36309 If that is so, their contribution alone for fourteen years would be something like £1,400?—Yes.

36310 £900 a year for fourteen years?—£12,600?—Yes.

36311 And during the same period the barony has lost not only £950 a year, but an average of, roughly speaking, £450 a year in addition to meet the deficit on working expenses, that would make their contribution £14,000?—Yes.

36312 So that the total contribution in respect of guarantee and working expenses has really been £26,600?—That is what it shows.

36313 That district is a poor district I fancy—the Donaghmore Extension district?—It is not a very rich district.

36314 It would entail a levy of something like eightpence in the £ in one barony?—And a shilling in the other.

36315 In the Donaghmore Extension returns they say that it is only 8½d. in Muskerry, the average for five years has been 8½d., and in other baronies it has only been 2d.—how do you make out a shilling?—I do not think it has ever been so much as a shilling; I declare that altogether.

36316 That is the average for five years; I do not see how it could be a shilling, because, taking the last at 23½d. it is considerably less than a shilling. I think you had better correct that if that is so.

36317 *Chairman*.—The Secretary gave us that information; I think he answered that question. (To Mr. O'Connor).—What is the rate in the £ that the ratepayers have to pay towards the deficiency on this railway?—In the inner area I believe it was about a shilling in the pound, and in the other areas sevenpence, it varies. Of course we cannot say all this line with the County Council. They levy the rate, but with regard to the amount of money that has been lost in working expenses, which the Chairman has pointed out, it does not exceed £4,436. That is the shortage in working expenses.

36318 *Colonel Hutchinson*.—That, of course, reflects the levy?

Mr. O'Connor.—Yes.
36319 (To *Witness*).—At any rate, whether it is sevenpence or a shilling, that is a pretty heavy levy on a poor district?—Yes.

36320 I do not know whether you were in the room yesterday when a good deal of evidence was given with regard to another railway, the Schull and Skibbereen, that apparently some of the deficit on working expenses would have been saved if the line had been better constructed in the first instance?—Yes, I was.

36321 Does that remark also apply to your railway, that some of that deficit of £400 a year would probably have been saved if the line had been more efficiently constructed—the curves not so quick, and so on?—Yes, that is so.

36322 Have you made any representation to the Board of Works or the Irish Government with a view to getting any assistance from them?—No.

36323 The matter has never been put before them?—No.

Examined by Mr. Serrot.

36324 I understand that the line is worked at the actual cost?—Yes.

36325 How do you ascertain the proportion of the actual cost that is due to the repair of the line, the maintenance of the way? You say it is worked out on train mileage?—Yes.

36326 Can you say how you ascertain the amount of actual cost that is due to the repair of the permanent way; is it in proportion to the extent of the train mileage of the branch as compared with the whole train mileage—is it on the assumption that the repairs are of even cost over the whole system?—No.

36327 It really means, I suppose, the cost of the actual repairs?—There is a regular staff kept on the Donaghmore Extension Railway.

36328 Then I suppose the repairs would be the actual wages and cost of material?—Yes.

36329 The repairs would be the expense of the staff and cost of materials used?—Yes, I take it so. Then there are some repairs to the wagons and coaches.

36330 Mr. Anwerd.—Have you got the working agreement there?—No.

36331 Has the Secretary got it?
Mr. O'Connor.—No, I have not.

36332 Mr. Serrot (to the witness).—This line was made on a guarantee by the Grand Jury?—Yes.

36333 And, no doubt, supervised by the County Surveyor?—It was, on the part of the Grand Jury.

36334 And inspected by the Board of Trade?—Yes.

36335 It appears to have been very badly made?—It would appear to my unskilled eye to be very badly made, at all events.

36336 Was it good gradients?—The gradients are not very difficult; it continues at something like 1 in 56 the whole way.

36337 The gradient does?—Yes.

36338 The curves are frequent and sharp?—Yes, the curves are very sharp and frequent for about two miles of the distance.

36339 But these could be got rid of by dissection of the line?—Yes, the rocks could be straightened.

36340 Without very great expense?—Without very great expense.

36341 As to the receipts and expenses, the receipts show a progressive tendency almost from the beginning?—Yes.

36342 With the exception of one or two years; but the expenses, for the reasons that you have stated, that is, the constant re-laying of this line, also show a very progressive tendency?—Yes.

36343 In the last half-year I think they rather tend to balance each other?—They do. The receipts were somewhat more.

36344 Do you see a prospect of a closer approximation of the receipts to the expenses in the future?—I do; for the reason I attempted to give a while ago, that we could run faster trains over the line.

36345 I notice here that the two turn-tables given to the line are both too small?—Both too small.

36346 There seems to have been great carelessness on the part of someone. Apart from the agriculture of the district, the creameries and the line, are there any other industries likely to be developed, if you could offer a better service?—There is the line. We have repeated applications for line from the districts, and we have made a contract with Mr. Jennings to supply us with lime—as much as he can deliver a day. The difficulty is that we cannot take as much as we want, on account of the gradients and the curves at the end.

36347 Is there any industry of a commercial or manufacturing character in that district?—No.

36348 Looking at the great difficulty of getting grants for these purposes, the weakness of the district which endeavours to press its local case upon the Treasury, should you like to see the establishment of an Irish authority, with resources in its hands, to deal with this transit question as a whole, regarding general public interests as well as local needs, and acting without recourse to special levies on particular districts?—I think it desirable that there should be an authority of such a character; but I think there should be very great restrictions. I am opposed, I may say, to the central authority. I believe that local authorities can manage an undertaking of this character very much more to the advantage of the districts than any central authority could.

36349 When you need an advance of public money, should you consider the case more hopeful if there

Nov. 13, 1897.

Mr. Michael Albert, P.P.,
Chairman of the Donaghmore Extension Light Railway.

The method of comparing the actual cost of working and maintaining.

The faulty construction of the railway causes an increase in the cost of working.

Receipts and expenditures show a progressive tendency.

The industries of the district saved by the railway.

The creation of an Irish authority to direct the general policy of the railways advocated.

Nov. 12, 1907

Mr. Michael
Alford, J.P.,
Chairman of
the Donaghmore
Extension
Light
Railway.

An Irish
authority
must likely
to provide
money for
extension,
etc., than the
Treasury.

The working
agreement
with the Cork
and Waterbury
Company.

The division
of receipts
and the
apportionment
of expenditure.

Mr. Patrick
Cullen,
Pratt
Exporters,
Carrick-on-
Suir.

Suggested
increase in
the number
of through
rates for fruit
traffic to
England.

Through
rates with
the North-
Eastern
Company long
asked for,
now about to
be given.
Suggested
extension of
the special
rates for fruit
to Manchester
to other
English
stations.

Approach
made to Great
Southern and
Western
and London
and North-
Western
Companies.

was an Irish central authority, rather than having to come to the Treasury in London?—It would all depend upon the authority.

36650. No doubt; but you know the Treasury, and you know the course of finance in relation to Irish railways, and the difficulty of obtaining grants: "the auspicious moment has not come," they say, in regard to money. Do you take the view that an Irish authority would be more likely to provide the money, if it had the resources and Irish interests required it, than the Treasury?—I fancy it would.

Examined by Mr. ARWORTHY.

36651. You say that the Cork and Muskerry works at actual cost; but I gather you are not quite prepared to explain the way in which the accounts are worked out?—The Secretary will explain that.

36652. You are not able to say?—No.

36653. Chairman.—If you want to clear it up, the Secretary is behind you.

36654. Mr. ARWORTHY (to Mr. O'Connor).—How are the accounts made up?—The accounts are made out. There is a regular staff of men on the line actually for the necessity of keeping the permanent way in order, and the stationmasters. The wages of those men are charged to the Donaghmore line.

36655. Direct?—Direct. The receipts are worked out then on a mileage basis.

36656. You are credited with the mileage proportion of your own receipts?—Precisely.

36657. You are credited with the whole of the receipts for the local traffic, and a mileage proportion through the Muskerry line?—Precisely.

36658. What about the rest of the expenditure?—The other expenditure would be on repairs of rolling stock. The Donaghmore Company contribute their proportion towards these repairs on the train mileage

run, the train mileage run on the Muskerry and Donaghmore are settled, and they are divided in proportion.

36659. And, I presume, the same proportion is applied to the cost of engine work and train work?—Precisely.

36660. To the Witness.—The general question I wanted to ask. You have no complaints; you are satisfied that they are treating you fairly?—The Muskerry Company.

36661. Yes?—Yes.

36662. You do not suggest that they are charging you too much?—No.

36663. It seems to me you are getting the work done pretty cheaply?—I think so.

36664. You say there are over 5,000 ordinary shares not guaranteed?—Yes.

36665. These, of course, have not got a dividend?—They were never issued.

36666. Never issued?—3,000 of them. The other 2,000 were, but they make no use of them.

36667. For practical purposes, they were not spent on the road?—No.

36668. The contractor got them, but they were unsaleable; and the other 2,000 have never been attempted to be sold?—No.

36669. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—It was 3,000, I think, according to the railway returns, Mr. Arworthy. Mr. Arworthy—I am taking it as he has it here, 5,000.

Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—In the railway returns it is 3,000.

Chairman.—That were issued?

Mr. Arworthy.—Brookline here says 5,000, of which 3,000 are issued.

Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—That is right—3,000.

Mr. Arworthy—3,000 have been issued, but there was no cash paid for them.

MR. PATRICK CULLEN EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

36669. What are you, Mr. Cullen?—I am a fruit exporter.

36670. Where?—At Carrick-on-Suir.

36671. What railways serve your district?—The Great Southern and Western and the Dublin and South-Eastern.

36672. You are not interested generally in the rates and charges for general merchandise, except for the fruit traffic, in which you deal?—Yes.

36673. Are you satisfied with the through rates that are in operation from your district to England? Have you through rates?—Yes, we have a number of through rates, but we have not as many as I would wish; we would like them to be more general than they are.

36674. I suppose your trade is with England principally?—Yes.

36675. Any particular part of England?—I have confined myself chiefly to Manchester for the last five or six years; but last summer we extended it considerably.

36676. Have you through rates to Manchester, Birmingham, and those districts? There are districts where you have no through rates, are there not?—Yes.

36677. And you think that if you had through rates you could outtrade trade?—Yes.

36678. What particular district is it you refer to when you say you have no through rates; is it the North-Eastern?—Yes, chiefly.

36679. I think we have had evidence within the last two or three weeks that through rates had been arranged?—I have been hammering for through rates for a long time, and have not been able to get them.

36680. Have you any recent correspondence?—Yes.

36681. Recent?—Yes.

36682. How long since?—A few days back. I applied for a through parcels rate. I applied to the Great Southern and Western on September 20th.

36683. Will you give us a case?—I wrote on September 20 as follows:—

"Dear Sir,—I beg to propose that the rate for fruit per passenger train be reduced from 5s. 10d. per cart to 4s. in all main line English stations for quantities not less than 2 cwt. We find the present rate a great hardship, considering our traffic is up to one ton nightly between all stations

between Carrick and Tipperary. There is a rate of 4s. to Manchester, but we are anxious to extend our operations, and would urge that this rate be adopted for Hull, Sheffield, Leeds, and Blackburn immediately, and the same to be retrospective from September 1st, 1907."

That letter was sent to the Great Southern and Western and the London and North-Western Railway Companies.

36684. That was rather a big order, was it not?—It was rather a tall order, but we confined ourselves to four stations which we were actually working at the time. We want it more general than it is.

36685. Do I understand that you get a through rate to Manchester and not to Sheffield?—No. Of course there is the 5s. 10d. rate, that is the ordinary parcels rate.

36686. You wanted a special rate for fruit?—Yes.

36687. By passenger train?—Yes.

36688. You have not got the reduction that you asked for?—No.

36689. What do you say the rate is to Manchester?—4s.

36690. And where is the 5s. 10d. rate in operation?—To Leeds, Sheffield, and, in fact, most places. Liverpool has a rate of 3s. 6d., but we were prepared to advance that to 4s. to get the rate applied to these stations.

36691. What have you to say about the passenger train service in your district?—Do you mean as to the number of trains?

36692. Yes, say that there is much to be desired in connection with the passenger train service; what is it?—The regularity of the service is very bad. It is a rare thing to find a train in up to time within ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes.

36693. Are you dealing now with main lines or with branch lines?—I consider that the Waterford and Limerick ought to be a main line anyhow.

36694. Yes are referring to the Waterford and Limerick line now?—Yes.

36695. I suppose there are a sufficient number of trains; you do not complain of the number?—I think the number is good enough if they were only a little more punctual.

3605 With regard to 3rd class accommodation—I suppose that as the district in which you live the bulk of the traffic is 2nd class?—Yes.

3606 In fact, I suppose that is the case all over Ireland?—Yes, it is.

3607 The 3rd class accommodation on the main lines, from what I have seen of it, appears to me to be very good?—Oh yes, they are coming along a bit. But occasionally we get carriages which are not up to the mark; I think it is time they did away with them.

3608 I am afraid you would find that everywhere. Then with regard to goods trains generally; I see you make complaints against goods trains. I suppose there is a regular service of goods trains established on the line—a fixed service?—Yes, there is.

3609 And it is sufficient for the requirements of the district, I suppose?—I think so. But what we take exception to is this. If we consign fruit parcels at the 5s. 10d. rate, practically we only get the same service as if we sent them at goods rate of 40s. a ton, up to a certain point.

3610 I do not see what you mean. 5s. 10d. is the passenger train rate?—Yes. To all intents and purposes. If we were to consign our traffic by goods train at the goods rate of 40s. per ton, which is slightly over one-third the passenger train rate, we should get practically the same service.

3611 *Laid Press*.—You would get practically the same service?—Yes.

3612 Then why do you not do it?—We have to adapt the passenger train service to try to obtain a little more security for the traffic. One of our consignees at Leeds wrote on September 19, "Blackberries arrived at noon. Can you not arrange for them to come six hours earlier; they would make more money." We adopted his suggestion, and on September 21 this is the report from the same correspondent with regard to the consignment. "Although these forty-eight have arrived as passenger traffic, they came by exactly same train as if they had come goods rate, so do not advise you to pay advanced charges."

3613 Mr. Ascroft.—The previous lot that arrived at 12 o'clock had been sent by goods train?—Yes. The next lot we sent by passenger train, and this is his account.

3614 *Chairman*.—Have you had any occasion to apply to the Railway Commissioners in connection with your business?—I have had serious complaints against the Great Southern and Western Company from time to time. The story is a long one. I have not given the details of it in my abstract, as I thought I could deal with it better verbally. I made application in 1901, through the Department, that my case should be brought before the Railway Commissioners, and their reply practically amounted to this—that because I was not a corporate body or a County Council they could not interest themselves in my behalf.

3615 What was the nature of your complaint?—I started this business in 1901. I came from Manchester to start this fruit exporting business. Prior to leaving Manchester I had been in correspondence with Mr. Bell, the Superintendent of the Great Southern and Western, with regard to the rates. At the time these rates varied between Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary between 4s. and 5s. 10d.

3616 Mr. Ascroft.—To where?—To Manchester. After some correspondence I secured a general rate of 4s. from all these stations to Manchester. I did not at the time make any direct application for goods rates; I thought that would come up in due course, and the fruit I intended to ship, which are called tuberoses, I intended to consign by passenger train. Blackberries would more or less go by goods service. After giving up my business in Manchester, the Great Southern and Western people wanted to stop my industry altogether. On three or four occasions their district superintendent came up and threatened to refuse to take the traffic, although it had been practically arranged with Mr. Bell before I came over from Manchester. I had a great deal of annoyance with them. I was supplying fruit at six stations. From one station, Kilsheelan, I had to bring the fruit by a train leaving Kilsheelan somewhere about half-past seven and take it on to Clonsilla to send it to Manchester. That train did not stop at Kilsheelan. My traffic out of Kilsheelan represented something up to 8 or 10 cwt. each evening,

but they would not stop the train to take it up, although they would stop the train for a passenger who would be prepared to go, perhaps, to New Milford, and would not pay the Company probably one-quarter the amount that my traffic was worth.

On one occasion the district superintendent came up and distinctly refused the traffic. I told him, "If you do that it will pay me better than sending it to Manchester. I have been in correspondence with Mr. Bell in respect to it; he is fully cognizant of the traffic; as a matter of fact the traffic has not approached the dimensions I put before Mr. Bell, and if he or the Great Southern and Western Company thought that they would not be able to deal with the traffic they had no right to entertain it at all." As a matter of fact, I had something like 120 baskets on the station, and he distinctly threatened not to get it on the train. I said, "If you leave it there it will pay me better than sending it to Manchester." After a good deal of argument, the fruit was put on. Again, he came up on the following day with further threatening, saying he had instructions from Mr. Bell that he was to refuse the traffic. I said, "If you think you can do that, you had better do it; it will pay me better than shipping it to Manchester. If you think you powers carry you that far you are at liberty to refuse the traffic." Then he began to talk about the Great Western would not do that and that. I said, "That has nothing to do with me; you have to take the traffic; you are bound to take it, there is no law to support your contention that you can refuse it while you have your offices open to receive parcels at parcels rate." They took the traffic for a couple of days, and then he asked me if I would see if I could do something with the Great Western, who were complaining of the difficulty of loading the traffic in a short time. I put myself in communication with the Great Western Company and obtained a concession from them that very few shippers in Ireland, or, I might add, in England, could obtain; I got the Great Western Railway Company to extend the time of departure of their boats by fifteen minutes to suit the convenience of the Great Southern and Western Railway. Still that did not satisfy them. On August 15th I had up to 600 packages of mushrooms purchased between Tipperary and Carrick-on-Suir. I think the fruit totalled on several nights between 300 and 500 packages; the traffic was dealt with chiefly by myself and my agents; we gave the Company practically no trouble about it; we loaded it and put it in the vans, and dealt with it from beginning to end. On this particular night, August 15th, I had something over 500 baskets of mushrooms. There had been an excursion to Banna that day for some sports or something of that sort, and the train that evening was forty minutes late arriving at Waterford. 120 packages of mushrooms were put on board. The Great Western Railway Company carried out their undertaking with me, for practically it was an undertaking; they waited until fifteen minutes past ten; then as soon as it was fifteen minutes past ten, they hanked up the gangway and left the balance of the mushrooms behind. The Great Southern and Western Company, or their representatives at Waterford, knew where I was, they knew the business I was carrying on, they knew that the staff was lying there, they let it lie there until Friday came, knowing at the same time they could not give me a service into Manchester to have that stuff sold. It was not attended to until Monday morning. I applied to the Company for compensation for the loss, but I could get no satisfaction from them; they declined the claim. I sent them in the County Court. It cost me between £30 and £50, and I was defeated on the technical point of whether they were supposed to carry the traffic via the port of Dublin. The Judge said he was not in a position to decide that. Unfortunately, I was not in a position to carry the case to the Court of Appeal, and had to let it stand. I started to ship blackberries in September—

3617 This year?—No; in 1901.

3618 *Chairman*.—Is this a story of 1901?—Yes.

3619 I thought it was this year?—No; it is worse this year.

3620 Can you not come to this year? It seems a long way back. There are personal grievances against the Railway Company; there has been a law suit resulting from them, and you lost it?—Yes;

Nov. 15, 1897.

Mr. Patrick Carlin, Fruit Exporter, Carrick-on-Suir.

Complaint as to Great Southern and Western Company not providing proper facilities to encourage Irish with fruit traffic to England.

Traffic refused, but subsequently taken by Great Southern and Western Company.

Complaint of delay to a consignment of mushrooms at Waterford, and refusal by the Great Southern and Western Company to pay compensation.

Legal proceedings taken against Company.

Nov 13, 1903.

Mr. Patrick
Gulson,
Print
Reporter,
Carrick-on-
Shir.

Delay on the
part of the
Great
Southern and
Western
Company in
arranging
through
parade
special rates
from Carrick-
on-Shir.

Unsatisfac-
tory sugges-
tions as to
rates made
by company.

Correspon-
dence with
the company.

but I am coming to the question of rates and facilities between the railway companies and the obstruction created by the Great Southern and Western Company.

35011. Can you not give us something more recent?—The most recent I have is my application for a parade rate between Carrick-on-Shir and Tipperary and cross-Channel stations. I have already read the letter I sent to the Great Southern and Western Railway; I have their acknowledgment of that letter here.

35012. You asked for the rate to be reduced to 4s.—Yes.

35013. And they have not agreed to it?—No. This is their reply.—“I have your communication of the 30th inst.”

35014. Mr. degeeth.—From whom is this letter, and what is the date?—It is from Mr. Bell.

35015. Chairman.—Who is Mr. Bell?—The Superintendent of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

35016. Passenger Superintendent?—Yes.

35017. Just read the letter!—It is dated September, 24th.—“I have your communication of the 30th inst., proposing a rate of 4s. per cwt. for fruit between all stations from Carrick to Tipperary, with Hull, Sheffield, Leeds, and Blackburn, and regret that I cannot see my way to put the figure named in operation, as I consider it rather low, but I will take up the matter with other interested companies, and endeavor to arrange suitable reasonable rates.—Yours truly, J. H. Bell.”

35018. That seems fair, does it not?—I called at their office on October 1st in connection with my application for these rates, and they made all sorts of excuses, with regard to the strike, and everything else, and said they could not see their way to reduce the rate. Mr. Bell's representative put some figures before me which did not suit me; in fact, the lowest suggestion he made was 4s. 6d., while Hull he left standing at 5s., which was practically useless to me. On my return home I wrote to them as follows—

“Adverting to our conversation of the 4th re passenger rates, I beg to confirm the statements I then made that any rate exceeding 4s. for lots of 5 cwt. are of no value to me. I am more than convinced that my suggestion ought to meet the case fully, viz., a maximum rate of 4s. for 5 cwt. lots to any station, a maximum rate of 4s. 6d. for 2 cwt. lots to east coast and east coast stations, and 5s. for 1 cwt. lots; a maximum rate of 4s. for 2 cwt. lots and of 4s. 3d. for 1 cwt. lots to western coast and western coast stations.”

35019. They did not agree to those?—They wrote:—“With reference to your undated letter, which I received this morning, I beg to acknowledge your receipt.” . . . I had shown him the receipts for the traffic we were giving to their Company, of 17 and 18 cwt. of parcels at 5s. 10d., to show that we were not asking them for special rates without giving them satisfaction that the rate was there. . . .

“For aught of which I am much obliged. I regret that I am not yet in a position to advise you regarding rates to cross-Channel stations. Referring to your letter of the 24th ult., I did not accept it in the light of a proposal of rates, as you only suggested figures which you considered might be proposed. The figures which you suggested are very low, and more than one Company regard them as unreasonably low. In addition, you did not detail any particular stations in your letter just referred to, and it is unreasonable to ask any Company to arrange rates with the thousands of stations embraced in the district mentioned by you, when you could not under the most favourable circumstances hope to have a traffic with the majority of such places.” That was not the purport of my letter at all. I asked for rates to Hull, Sheffield, Leeds, and Blackburn, and they replied on the 24th acknowledging the letter. Now they state that we did not make any specific application at all. The point I want to come at is this, that I am under the impression, and that very strongly, that had that application for rates applied to any station on the Great Western Railway they would have been put in force.

35020. Yes, mean to say that they favour the route by the Great Western rather than from Dublin?—That is the position.

35021. That is your idea; that is what you say?—Yes.

35022. Whereas for Sheffield and other places the best route is through Dublin?—Yes.

Examined by Lord PIERCE.

35023. How much traffic have you in the year from Carrick-on-Shir? That is the principal station that you send from, is it not?—From practically all principal stations.

35024. But you mentioned the figure of 10 cwt. a night. I did not know whether you meant roughly 150 tons a year?—No; it is only for the season.

35025. The season?—Yes; our season lasts about three months.

35026. You only want a rate to cover you during the three months?—Yes.

35027. During the three months do you send 10 cwt. a night on the average?—An average of 2 tons a night. That is out of Carrick alone; we work seven or eight places altogether.

35028. Then your traffic is a considerable one?—It is. Last season we turned out up to 110 tons of fruit.

35029. In the three months?—Yes.

35030. Chairmen.—By passenger train?—No; mostly by goods train. We were applying for parade rates this year to try to extend the business and not be confined to Manchester.

35031. Your seasonal traffic last year was about 110 tons altogether?—Yes.

35032. What was it six years ago?—That was the point I wanted to lead up to. During the first year I started up to the time I was suspended, by the absence of through rates via Dublin, I put out over 6,000 packages of victuaries, each containing 7 lbs.

35033. How does that compare in tonnage?—That would work out at 26 or 27 tons.

35034. Lord Pierce.—28 tons; that is seven years ago. Now you have worked the traffic up to 110 tons?—Yes.

35035. If you got the rate you have yourself suggested to the Railway Company, would your traffic increase, and if so by how much do you think it would increase?—I will not say anything about the increase of traffic, but it would have increased the receipts of the Company. This year we have met with disappointment over the weather. Although we had upwards of nine places out of which we were shipping fruit, I do not suppose that, altogether, we approached last year's total.

35036. This year was not equal to last?—No.

35037. Chairman.—The weather was against you?—Yes.

35038. Lord Pierce.—What was passing through your mind when you said that reducing the rate would be beneficial to the Railway Company. I want to get that cleared up. You said that if the Railway Company reduced the rate the Railway Company would be better off. How would it be better for the Railway Company if it did not increase the traffic?—We are bound to increase the traffic. You asked me how much we would increase it, and that I could not say definitely, because I have not control of the weather and so on.

35039. But you answered the question very distinctly that it would be better for the Railway Company if they reduced the rate?—Certainly, because we would be inclined to send our traffic by passenger service instead of by goods.

35040. You mean that they would get the higher passenger rate?—If the Railway Company would meet your view you would send all your traffic at passenger train rates?—To a great extent.

35041. They would get the passenger rate instead of the small rate which they get for goods?—Yes.

35042. But, so far as the amount is concerned, the number of tons, you do not think that that would be increased very much?—Oh, yes. I found a company last year with the main intention of considerably increasing the business in the South of Ireland between Waterford and Fermoy.

35043. In all kinds of fruit would that be?—The same class of fruit.

35044. Mushrooms and blackberries?—Wild fruit, in particular.

35045. Does that wild fruit give a large amount of employment in the neighbourhood to girls in picking it?—What sort of labour do you employ?—Women and girls, generally.

36946 Is it of importance to the district to get work of the sort?—It is.

36947. Have you any manufactures there?—We have no manufactures.

36948. Therefore, to a large extent, this trade of yours is keeping the girls at home and giving them good healthy work?—Yes.

36949. Lord Pirrie.—Have you ever applied to the Department of Agriculture to assist you?—

36950. Chairman.—He told us that he did, and that they replied that, as he was only an individual, they could not take the matter up?—Because I was not a County Council or a Corporation.

36951. That was the reply?—That is what it amounted to.

36952. Mr. Seddon.—The law says that public bodies may complain, but it does not say that private individuals may not.

36953. Lord Pirrie.—You applied to the Railway Commission, did you not?—No, to the Department; I put the whole matter before the Department, telling them what I had gone through and what I had suffered at the hands of the Company.

36954. Lord Pirrie.—You wanted them to bring pressure to bear on the Railway Company?—

36955. Chairman.—You wanted them to take the matter up before the Railway Commissioners?—Yes.

36956. Lord Pirrie.—That is not the question I was going to ask.

36957. Have you ever tried to get the Department of Agriculture to assist you in the way of developing the wild fruit industry in that particular healthy district of yours?—I do not think they are able to.

36958. Lord Pirrie.—That is not the question I asked.

36959. Chairman.—You have never applied?—Yes, we have.

36960. Lord Pirrie.—If they put down fields of blackberries or wild strawberries, or assisted in that way, would it not be beneficial to the neighbourhood?—Yes, it would, but I do not entirely agree with their method with regard to the development of the fruit industry; I am opposed to it.

36961. You know that they do a great deal of work with regard to the raising of bees, the making of tallow, and that sort of thing?—Yes.

36962. But they have never come to the assistance of this particular trade?—No, not the wild fruit trade, so far as we are concerned. I believe they have done it in other districts.

36963. You take very strong exception to the railway companies' management; you suggest that the managers are not left alone, and that the directors require to control every penny. Have you any evidence to justify the suggestion that the managers want to do certain things and the directors prevent them?—It would probably extend my going over the whole of the period of my seven years' work. I know that when I have interviewed representatives of the Company I have put to them some rather pointed questions, and I have known by the embarrassment I have put them on that they were not in a position to answer the questions I put.

36964. In other words, you mean to say that the manager who is supposed to be there to come between you and the directors has not the power to settle anything with you?—No.

36965. That is what you mean?—Yes.

36966. And that there should be more latitude given to the managers, or else the directors should do the work themselves?—The managers ought to manage or else leave it alone.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson P.O.

36967. With reference to that particular engagement of mushrooms in August, to which you referred, I gather that you not only lost the value of three-fourths of the consignment through its being left on the quays at Waterford owing to the train going late, but that in attempting to get some indemnification from the railway company for the delay, and in pursuing them from one court to another, you incurred a further loss of £50?—Yes.

36968. What was the actual money value of the mushrooms lost?—About £35.

36969. So that in virtue of an express undertaking on the other side of the water that they would take your traffic at certain rates, you sent them a consignment worth about £60, owing to delays in the railway service on your side of Waterford a part of that consignment was left behind; and when you tried

to get some restitution for the delay you were put to another loss of \$0 per cent more than the original value of the goods?—Yes.

36970. You say that the railway company sheltered themselves behind the excuse that they were not bound to take them via Waterford?—Via Dublin; it was consigned via Waterford and Milford.

36971. And they said, what?—They put in the defence, first, that the goods were sent at owners' risk; secondly, that they were not bound to send them via—

36972. Still, even at owners' risk, the railway company are responsible for delay, or such delay as renders a consignment practically worthless, are they not?—I do not know what they are really responsible for sometimes.

36973. Do I understand you to say that these rates which you wish to have put in force via the North-Western system to Sheffield, and other places, are at present in force to towns situated about the same distance apart on the Great Western system?—No, not so far as parcels traffic is concerned, but goods traffic. We have had rates fixed over the Great Western system in one case in seven days from making the application, and this has been going on since September 20.

36974. Do the rates via the Great Western system, via Rosliffe, compare advantageously with the rates fixed to towns on the North-Western system for similar distances?—Yes.

36975. In other words, they are denser on the North-Western system to towns similarly situated as regards distance?—No; I think the advantage is with the North-Western.

36976. I thought that your argument was that they favoured traffic over the Great Western system to encourage the Rosliffe traffic at the expense of traffic going to Dublin via the North-Western. I do not know whether I am right in that?—The idea I have of this question is that the Great Western Railway Company are paying the Great Southern and Western Railway Company a proportion of the rate between stations in the South of Ireland and Dublin for that traffic which passes over their system via Rosliffe.

36977. Somebody must be losing by it, either the Great Western or the Irish system; it would not be the Irish system?—No.

36978. Was not the effect of the judgment given the other day by the Railway and Canal Commissioners in Dublin, that similar through rates were to apply for similar distances to all traffic passing either via the Dublin and South-Eastern or via the Great Southern and Western, via Rosliffe, or via Dublin? I think that that is the effect of the judgment?—The, as a long time passing it into force.

36979. But that would remove any grievance in that respect in the future, would it not?—Yes.

36980. You are an Englishman who came over to Ireland some six or seven years ago with the hope of developing or creating an industry which practically was non-existent; is not that so?—It had been worked somewhat indifferently for a number of years.

36981. But not to any extent?—Not to any extent; my father had encouraged consignment of wharves.

36982. And your experience is not likely to encourage other gentlemen in your position, and of your nationality, to come over to Ireland and try to start other industries?—No, it is not.

36983. The difficulties you have encountered have been entirely at the hands of the railway company?—Yes.

36984. Did I understand you to say that in one particular instance you actually shipped, or put on rail, at Kilsheelan, blackberries for Channel, and they actually came back to Kilsheelan, on their way to Waterford?—Yes.

36985. Chairman.—They were carried by passenger train, which did not stop at the station?—The passenger train to Waterford did not stop at Kilsheelan; they put a penalty on bringing the traffic up; they would not allow me that consignment.

36986. Excuse me, did I understand you to say that they would stop the train to take up a passenger?—Yes.

36987. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—In fact, you shipped your traffic from Kilsheelan to Clonmel, five or six miles, and then it came back that five or six miles and went on to Waterford?—Yes.

36988. And, according to your statement, the same company would stop the train at Kilsheelan to take up one passenger?—Yes.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Mr. Patrick Curran, Frank Espartero, Curran Espartero.

The owners' risk rates as introduced by the railway company as one of claims.

The Great Southern and Western Railway Company expedite the fixing of through rates via Rosliffe rather than through Dublin.

Suggestion that the Great Western Railway Company are subsidising the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to divert goods to the Rosliffe route.

The railway company alleged to have impeded the development of the wild fruit industry.

Unnecessary train arrangements unadvised.

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. Patrick
Cortese,
Fruit
Exporters,
Corkdon-
don.

The efforts
made by the
Department
of Agriculture
to reduce
traders'
complaints.

Reference
made to the
wild fruit
industry in
the report of
the Depart-
ment.

The type of
non-returnable
fruit
packages re-
commended
for use by the
Department.

The question
packages, etc.,
proposed
before the
Commission
by the
Department.

36995 I suppose the value of your consignment represented certainly as much, if not more, than the passenger I—Oh, yes.

36996 I see you have a very strong remark here about the Department of Agriculture. In answer to Lord Purser, you said that you had brought one complaint before the Department, who replied that owing to your not being a public body, they could not entertain it. And you say in your abstract: "As to the Department of Agriculture, it is the most useless institution in existence, as far as traders are concerned," and so on. You must know that there have been a great many individual complaints of traders taken up by the Department, and that they have resulted in substantial redress being afforded. Of course, in regard to going before the Railway and Canal Commission, you know that there is a provision in the Act which enables local authorities and local bodies to interfere on behalf of traders, and to pay the costs in certain circumstances, but that has nothing to do with the Department. The Department can intervene on behalf of any one individual, and has done so very successfully. Have you not had friends yourself who have invoked its assistance and derived benefit therefrom?—No. I was a stranger in the country.

36997 But you are not a stranger now; you have been here six or seven years. I think if you will look at the returns of the Department, where they give chapter and verse of the complaints they have investigated, you will see that in many cases—and it is becoming more so every year—their action is successfully invoked!—Would you happen to me for a minute? The report last year contained a statement that a slippage in the South of Ireland who shipped large consignments of fruit in second-hand baskets lost more shillings than he gained pence. That was directed to me, because I am practically the largest shipper of wild fruit in Ireland—or my Company is now.

36998 That was published in the Department's report!—That was published in the Department's report. I shipped last year three times the quantity of stuff that we have done this year, and I had only one claim against the railway company, for a matter of £4. This year, on the recommendation of the Department, we adopted new baskets. The informant made by one of the representatives of the Department was that the railway companies threatened to increase the rates unless new baskets were adopted. Further than that, that they were declining to pay any claims made for fruit shipped in second-hand baskets. I may mention that these baskets that I am referring to as second-hand baskets are baskets used by the Germans in shipping the same class of fruit from Hamburg into the English ports, I used to buy them in Manchester, and have them sent over to Ireland to work my traffic over to Manchester. At the instance of the Department, we adopted the new baskets, which they recommended, and on claims for loss, damage and delay amounted to £146 for our season's working.

36999 This year?—Yes.

37000 Chairman.—As against £4.

37001 Colonel Hutchinson Per.—£4 with the German baskets?—Yes.

37002 Mr. Aherli.—Delay could not touch the question of baskets?—No; it is damage, as a matter of fact. The point I wish to raise with regard to the Department is this: The representative of the Department stated that the companies would increase the rates. I am very much afraid that they will. I have not had so much claim during the whole seven years of my trading as I have had this year, practically all resulting from the baskets; they are not up to the standard required by the trade, in this sense, they are not the idea. I am one with the Department in regard to new baskets, but the question of non-returnable crates, which is the main feature, has not been worked up to the point of perfection which would encourage the slippage in regard to Cross-Channel traffic with interior stations.

37003 Colonel Hutchinson Per.—We have had evidence from several officials of the Department engaged in the fruit industry; they produced the different kind of boxes, crates, barrels, and so on, for our inspection, and according to their evidence since the traffic has been carried in these baskets, it has been carried much more efficiently, and with much less loss to the trader; also, that owing to the cheap cost of production of these baskets,

crates, and so on, they were not worth returning, and they could afford to supply them to the different traders at very low prices, and so do away with all the trouble of returning crates and so on. You do not agree with that evidence apparently?—The exception I take is to the Department's remarks with regard to my traffic last year and how it has worked out this.

37004 I understood from those officers' reports that they based the description of packages, which they recommended very much, on the packages in use on the Continent; I think they said that they worked them out from those and rather improved upon them, according to their idea?—The Continental packages will stand 500 lbs. pressure.

37005 In other words, you prefer sticking to what you had before?—It is not a question of which I prefer at all; the difficulty is with the railway company and the condition in which goods arrive when shipped in the new baskets across Channel, unless some arrangement can be made with regard to handling and treading.

37006 Better handling?—There are several points in connection with the transit. For instance, if we ship at the 40s rate we can ship at company's risk, but if we pay the 5s 10d parcels rate it is owner's risk. Another point is that if we consign fruit from Carrick by goods train we can have it put into vans and it is not dealt with until it gets to the North Wall, and it goes at the rate of 40s a ton. The rate for fruit in tubs is 25s. 4d. But fruit sent by passenger train at 5s 10d per cwt. is first handled at Carrick; it is then thrown out at Limerick Junction; then it is handled again when it is put into the waggons. Of course that all has a very detrimental effect upon it; it cannot possibly arrive in good condition when it is being handled about the that.

37007 Then I gather—probably you will agree with me—that under present conditions, where traffic has to be handled by so many different hands, different railway companies, dockmen, and so on, it is hopeless to expect that traffic will ever get such careful handling as to admit of these very lightly-constructed boxes being profitably used; is that your view? Do you think it is possible to expect that they will ever bring about such a state of things as the different carrying companies that their employees will handle goods with such care that they can profitably carry them in these lightly-constructed boxes?—In the second year that I started this industry I put a proposal before the London and North-Western Railway Company with regard to the construction of vans for the carriage of the traffic, not so much with a view to its safety as with a view to facility of despatch, and the London and North-Western Railway Company were prepared to construct three crates at their own expense and carry them backwards and forwards between Manchester and North Wall of the Great Southern and Western would on their part carry them down to Carrick, and Clonmel, and Tipperary. But the Great Southern and Western declined to do it, although I believe they really should have been the first to adopt it.

37008 Was it put before them by the London and North-Western Company?—No; it was put before them through me; I had the management of the thing. I approached Mr. Neale about it.

37009 And I suppose you intimated to him that the London and North-Western Company, on their part, would agree to these conditions?—Yes.

37010 That is a case where I think the intervention of the Department might very usefully have been employed; an English company were prepared to give you a great advantage and concession, in your opinion, but it apparently came to nothing, owing to the difficulties raised by the Irish company?—I am looking forward to the Department's being able to sustain our claims now.

37011 Have you formed any views, or can you make any suggestions as to how the present management of the railways could be improved?—I think the only system required with regard to improving the conditions is a special court for dealing with all those questions with regard to rates, claims, and differences between the public and the companies.

37012 I want now, with regard to any alteration in the existing conditions of the railway system either amalgamation or public ownership, either under the State or under a national authority?—I am satisfied that you cannot improve the present condition. It is only a matter of getting away with some of the detail.

37003. The system of private ownership, you mean, in the case of a number of companies, is the best?—Yes.

37004. Do you take that as a broad principle applying generally, or would you make any exception with regard to amalgamating some of the smaller lines, especially in the West of Ireland?—No. I would advocate that some of the smaller lines should be subordinated and given a chance of pushing on.

37005. Who should subdivide them?—The Government.

37006. I meant little lines, such as the Schull and Ballyhenry; there are ten or twelve in the Cork and Brandon system alone?—I would advocate in such cases that they should be amalgamated, but I do not think that they should be merged in the Great Southern and Western, say.

37007. You would leave the Cork and Brandon Railway to take charge of those ten or twelve subsidiary companies?—Yes; make one or two good companies of them.

37008. How many other companies would you propose to leave. The Great Southern and Western, I presume?—I have nothing to say against the Great Southern and Western; we fight, there is no doubt about that, but we could go along somehow.

37009. Practically, if you amalgamate these smaller lines in the West, you would leave the Great Southern and Western and the Dublin and South-Eastern in possession of the Southern part of the country?—Yes.

37010. With regard to the Northern part of the country, would you propose to merge the Cavan and Leitrim, the Clogher Valley, the Sligo and Letcham, and other lines, in the Great Northern?—No.

37011. You would let them have a separate committee?—There should be a greater number of competitive companies in Ireland—that is, of larger companies. There are too many small insignificant companies; they are not railway companies, which all is said and done.

37012. What would you do with these small companies?—I would merge them into one company and let them run competitively with the Great Northern. Practically the country is lodeaded; it is all on the west coast. You want to develop the west coast, and open it up in the same way.

37013. Would not that development be more likely to come about, in your judgment, if the railways were in the hands of one powerful company, than in the hands of nine or ten small weak companies?—I do not think so.

Examined by Mr. AHERN.

37014. I was rather surprised at your conclusion. The Great Southern and Western is not so bad after all?—You have those things to contend with as branches.

37015. Undoubtedly. And when you get a Government Department like the Board of Agriculture, they do not altogether come up to your desires, do they?—No; they do not.

37016. But after all, I gather that in spite of your difficulties you have had a satisfactory growth of business?—Oh, no; it has not been a satisfactory growth at all.

37017. Not all that you could wish?—No.

37018. But a substantial growth?—If there has been it is the result of my own application, and not of any assistance I have received.

37019. Quite so, and I congratulate you upon it. But the faults of other people have not prevented the business from growing; let us put it in that way?—I must admit that when I came to Ireland I was not so good as the rates reduced. My contention is that if the industries are there the railway companies will give way, but you cannot expect them to work for nothing.

37020. You have got the rates reduced, and you have got the facilities improved, and there is fair hope, from the letters you have read, that you are going to get further reduced rates?—I will.

37021. Not all that you would like, perhaps, but you are going to get a good deal—4s. 9d. instead of 5s. 10d. and that sort of thing?—Yes.

37022. That is not so bad, is it? You hope your traffic will increase still further?—Yes, it will.

37023. Is not that all rather satisfactory than otherwise?—What I complain of chiefly is the slow way they go about things. For instance, I have been hammering away for that reduction for the

last two months. The point I want to come at is that I am rather inclined to think that the Great Southern and Western are standing out of that race in order to let the year run out, and I will be blocked for any retrospective rebates.

37024. That may or may not be?—That is the inference.

37025. Anyway, you would like things to move more quickly?—Yes.

37026. You come from Manchester?—Yes.

37027. And Manchester is a pretty busy commercial place?—Yes.

37028. Now, you have gone to a country place with no manufactures, do you find your neighbours, the working people of Carnock-on-Sun, quite as brisk as they are in Manchester?—No, they are not quite as brisk.

37029. You find a natural difference in the climate, do you not, between the busy commercial place and the country place?—Yes.

37030. And it extends to the railways?—Yes.

37031. And I expect it extends to the porters?—It does.

37032. You do not expect to get as smart a porter as you get in Lancashire?—They could be made smarter than they are.

37033. No doubt you are improving them; you are making them sit up. You do not want any drastic alteration made?—No.

37034. You could put up with the Great Southern with the improvements you hope to introduce?—Yes.

37035. If you get that you hope your trade will develop?—Yes.

37036. And that is, you think, what we ought to work for?—That is my idea.

37037. Do you know that you have a right to propose a through rate to the Railway Commission without incurring any expense?—Yes, I know that.

37038. If you wrote to the Railway Commission and said that you proposed such and such a rate, and sent to the Railway Company a copy, unless the Company took objection, the rate would come into force as a matter of course?—The companies would not allow it.

37039. The Commission would allow it unless the Company could make a good defence?—They can always make a good defence.

37040. You have a rate of 5s. 9d. to Liverpool?—Yes.

37041. Blackburn is not more than twenty miles beyond Liverpool, I should think? No, I do not think it is.

37042. By the Act of Parliament, the maximum they could charge for a cart, of blackberries for twenty miles would be 4s. If you were to suggest to the Railway Commission that the rate to Liverpool was 5s. 9d., and that for twenty miles further, allowing the maximum power, it would be only 4s. 5d., I think the Railway Company would have a very awkward case to meet?—I have not pushed matters as far as I should have done, because it has been the height of my season, and that is what I take exception to; these questions of rates crop up probably just at the time you want the rates.

For instance, I could have sent maybe several tons of stuff to Hull.

37043. Clearly, it is of great importance to you to get the rate to-morrow?—I want it at once.

37044. And the Railway Company, having a hundred other things besides blackberries to attend to, keep you waiting, and you feel it very hard; that is human nature?—Yes.

37045. On the other hand, if you were a railway company, and had all your men striking or likely to strike, you would think that more important than blackberries, would you not?—Yes.

37046. You cannot blame the Railway Company for taking things in their turn, can you?—I think they have enough assistance to deal with questions of rates while other departments look after the strike.

37047. Still there are other things; I only named strikes because you mentioned them yourself. They have other rates to settle?—Yes.

37048. I suggest to you, if they are not quite as quick as you think they ought to be, try the effect of exercising your powers under the Act. Do you know the Act?—Yes.

You try if you cannot do it that way. Perhaps you will find that you will get what is necessary more quickly that way than by the other.

Nov. 13, 1909.

Mr. Patrick Corbett, First Examiner, Comptroller-General.

The necessity for some co-operation on the part of the railway companies in arranging matters with the public.

The privilege of tender to propose through rates to the Railway and Canal Commissioners.

Alleged loss of trade arising from the Company's delay in arranging rates.

Aug. 13, 1907.

Mr. Patrick
Carrick,
Dublin.
Exporters,
Carrick-
Carr.

Examined by Mr. SEARON.

37049. You want to get a through rate and the railway company refuse to give it you?—Yes.
37050. It is suggested that if you go to the Railway Commissioners all will be made right. But if the Railway Company first refuse a through rate, will they not oppose you before the Railway Commissioners?—They may not take that step, assuming it is a suggestion of a 4s. 5d. rate. Assuming you make an application for a rate they are not going to fight you before the Commission perhaps for 4s., and that might be the only difference there would be between myself and the Company.

The expense
of proceedings
before the
Railway and
Canal Com-
missioners
does not in-
crease the
cost of the
goods being
help.

37051. But the rate would be a permanent rate and might apply to a considerable trade. The Railway Company, having considered the matter, and refused to grant the through rate, is not the probability in favour of the view that they would not concede it simply because you went to the Railway Commission? Would it not be open to them to engage a heavy bar and fight the matter out?—They would do that, I have not the slightest doubt.

Mr. Searon.—My suggestion is that they would not case to fight what would probably be a losing case.

37052. Mr. Searon.—My suggestion is that if they refused the concession to the trader they would oppose it before the Railway Commissioners, because the effect of yielding without a struggle would be to multiply demands; it would spread the impression that after refusing the trader they would yield to the Railway Commission, and such a view, if generally entertained, would prove so inconvenient that they would be much more likely to fight—I quite follow you there.

The several
public Deposi-
taries con-
sidered in rail-
way matters
subject to the
ordinary
trader.

37053. I gather from you that the different agencies in existence for tempering the wind to the trader are of very little use. The Board of Trade, the Railway Commission, and the Department of Agriculture—you think they are of very little use?—They are to a man who is not a capitalist.

37054. To the ordinary trader?—To the ordinary trader; he has not a chance with them, and they know it.

Refusal of the
Department of
Agriculture to
take action as
a complaint
against the
Great
Southern and
Western Rail-
way Com-
pany of ex-
cessive through
rates.

37055. In fact, does it come to this, that if you cannot yourself get what you want from the Railway Company you have practically no redress?—Not a bit.

37056. What was it exactly that you wanted the Department to do? In the autumn of 1901 I had spent over £200 in trying to make arrangements to ship blackberries, and I approached the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to give me the same rate as Dublin as existed via Waterford. That they emphatically declined to do. I made other suggestions, and they declined them. I asked them whether, if I shipped the traffic at the rate which then existed, they would undertake to give me a refund if the rate came into force within three months. They would not do that, although the North Western people who were present at the interview assented, and said they were prepared to fall in with any suggestion or arrangement that met the Great Southern and Western. They declined all these proposals, and I lost all that traffic—400 tons of blackberries; I had to stop shipping, besides losing the money I had speculated on arranging to work the season.

Several lines of
trade the
result.

37057. What did you ask the Department to do?—After I had got pretty well cleared out, and a Commission set some time in the following season, I suggested to the Department that they should bring my case before the Commission.

37058. And their reply was what?—I had no idea that I should appear before this Commission, or I would have kept the correspondence; but their reply amounted to this—that because I was not a public body, a co-operative body, or anything of that sort, they could not assist me.

The powers
of the Depart-
ment in assist-
ing small as
well as co-
operative

37059. Did they continue you that they could not or that they would not?—I could not answer that.

37060. We know that they have as full discretion to appear on behalf of an individual as on behalf of a corporation; so if they conveyed to you that they had no discretion in the matter that was not the case?—Then gentlemen here said that if I had friends it might have been a different thing.

37061. You understand that the Department have power to do it if they please?—On the suggestion of

this gentleman, that if you have friends—I find that that is the case with Government bodies generally—if you have anybody behind you?—

37062. Colonel Hulsebosch Pse.—I did not suggest that?—I thought you inferred that if I had any friend who would bring the matter before the Department?—

37062. Oh, no, I hope it will not go on the notes that I made such a suggestion.

37063. Mr. Searon.—I think you are very well able to belittle yourself. Friends or no friends, if you had a case, it was not only right but the duty of the Department, under the Act, to bring it before the Commission?—I applied on the strength of the Act.

37064. If ever such a case should occur again, do not be put off with any idea that you must be a public body in order to entitle the Department to appear on your behalf. Now, the exports of this class of fruit from Ireland are so inconsiderable at present that the trade must be capable of great development. Is there a wide market for it?—There is a very wide market for it.

37064. Therefore the trade is capable of great expansion?—Yes.

37065. How long have you been in Carrick?—In the district seven years, or eight seasons.

37066. And in spite of adverse circumstances you have been able to develop the trade considerably?—Yes.

37067. If the circumstances had been what you consider fair, the development would have been much greater, I suppose?—It would.

37068. You have made a good many complaints of the management of the railways. In fact, there is hardly any grave complaint that could be made that is not included in your list?—I do not think there is.

37069. You think they have committed all the faults?—Under the various heads.

37070. For instance, want of through rates. Is it not a very serious thing that any one company of the number which exist should be in a position to refuse a through rate? Does not the public interest require that there should be some mode of securing a through rate free from the caprice of an individual company or the use of an expensive resort to the Railway Commission?—Yes, there should be.

37071. There should be some cheaper and shorter way of getting a through rate?—Yes.

37072. Then there is singularity of train service of all kinds, due to the plurality of these govern-ments of railways?—Yes.

37073. You think it a false principle to apply to railway management that every service, every train, must pay for itself?—Yes, that is rather a bad feature on the Great Southern and Western Railway, because if a train does not pay it must not run.

37074. Could there be any worse feature in a system of transit, so important for developing trade, than that each particular service or train must pay for itself?—I do not know a silder principle in commerce.

37075. I agree?—If I had to look to every com-ment of blackberries to pay I should give it up.

37076. The Railway Companies seem to think they have made a conclusive reply to any complaint on this head when they say there were only so many passengers by the train or that there was only so much of a particular kind of traffic. Surely the question of proper transit facilities ought to be regarded more as a whole?—That is my opinion.

37077. I fear that as long as you have so many companies, governed by private boards, you will never get rid of the principle which you describe as being the silliest that could be applied in reference to the question. Unless you unite the railways and make the transit question a public question, governed by a public authority, you will never attain to having a service the more prosperous parts of which are made to subsidize the less prosperous?—Then you destroy our competitive independence, and that is worse.

37078. I have failed, so far in this inquiry, to find out what is the value of competition as between railways to the Irish trader?—My point is that, although there is a good deal to be said against the railway companies, they have to be sympathized with a little. There are no industries in the country, that is the worst feature of the country. We want to develop industries, and I think there would be a corresponding response from the railway companies.

though it might be slow. England has had to do her share at it, and competition in England has brought down rates to the necessary level. We could do that in Ireland if we had industries.

37079. England is at the extreme of commercial development, and Ireland is at the extreme of undevelopment. The two countries, though side by side on the map, are the most extremely opposite in their circumstances of any in the world, is not that so?—That is so; yes.

37080. You have stated that a reduction of the rates would tend to bring about an increased traffic development in Ireland. Whatever other opinions may be held about Ireland on any part of the Irish question, no rational being can deny that Ireland is in need of industrial development?—I could say a lot on that, but it would take too long.

37081. But you could answer that question: Ireland is in great need of industrial development?—It is; there is no question about it.

37082. You go so far as to say that "certainly many of the rates and fares are absolutely prohibitive"?—Yes.

37083. That is, that they forbid trade?—Yes.

37084. Is not that a sort of commercial high treason in a country where there is such need of development? Could there be a greater sin against a country extremely in need of industrial development than that "certainly many of the rates and fares are absolutely

prohibitive"? Is it not an urgent need that these rates and fares should be brought within the means of traders—rates especially?—Yes. But I do not quite follow you on the point of bringing them all under one governing body.

37085. I am not on that at present. Take my question in its limited scope. If the country is badly in need of industrial development, if the railways as managed exercise a deplorable influence, if many rates and fares are absolutely prohibitive, does it not follow that a reduction of these rates is an urgent need of the country?—Yes.

37086. I think you are dubious about subsidies, for you say, "Why reduce rates and fares and increase taxes?"—That is the general result. If you got subsidies for new railway facilities, you generally have to pay for them some other road.

37087. You would hike rates and fares to be reduced, but you are dubious whether that ought to be brought about by an increase of taxes—which I take to be what you mean—a policy of subsidism?—Yes.

37088. I am very much inclined to agree with you. But supposing by any reform a general reduction of rates and fares, stimulating industrial development, which is so much required, could be brought about, without resorting to subsidies or imposing a drain on the public purse, do you not think that that would be of great importance to the country?—Yes, it would.

Nov. 15, 1905.

Mr. Patrick
Curran,
Barrister,
Cork.

A reduction
in rates and
fares is
essential to the
development
of industrial
development.

Also a reform
in the railway
system that
would subse-
quently induce
industrial
development.

Mr. JAMES BYRNE, F.P., examined by Lord FINLAY (in the Chair).

37089. Mr. Byrne, do you give evidence on behalf of yourself only or of any association?—Of myself.

37090. From what county do you come?—Cork.

37091. I suppose you have nothing to complain of down there; everything is done there just as you would wish it, is it not?—The first thing I have to complain of is that the Great Southern and Western Railway have no train coming from North of Mallow stopping at Castletownroche and Ballyhoo, two stations near me; there is no connection there since the Rosslare express was commenced, except for three months in the year.

37092. Do you mean to say that the Rosslare route has interfered with a convenience which you had before that line was opened?—Yes. The 12.30 from Dublin runs for three months of the year, and we have a connection during those three months, but once that is stopped we have no connection. So that if I go to Dublin, if I do not leave by the 9.15 in the morning I have no train to bring me to my station.

37093. You have none at all that day?—No, unless I leave by the 6.15. Then, if I go to Bandon or Charleville, if I have business there, and I do not leave till about 12 o'clock, I cannot go home that day. So that I have to drive nine months of the year nine or ten miles instead of the four or five which it would be from the station nearest me. And that applies to all other people as well.

37094. Do you mean to say that the Rosslare route has not improved your district in the way of passenger accommodation except for three months of the year?—Except for three months of the year.

37095. And for the balance of the year it is not as convenient as it was before that fast service was cut?—Yes.

37096. And all that district—Castletownroche, Ballyhoo, and so on—are not as well served?—Are not served at all after the train reaching Castletownroche at 2.10 p.m.

37097. Have you any suggestions to put before us as regards that?—If the 12.30 train which now stops at Limerick Junction ran on to Mallow, a distance of thirty-eight miles, it would serve the section of Castletownroche and Ballyhoo.

37098. Have you put that before the railway company, or have the District Council put it before them?—I put it before the railway company.

37099. Yourself?—Yes, and I got the parish priests of the respective parishes also to write to them. Furthermore, I brought the case before Parliament.

37100. Before Parliament?—Yes; I got the member for the division to put a question.

37101. You are not a member yourself?—Oh, no, but I got the member for the division to put a question, and they said it would not pay. It is only a matter of running the train thirty-eight miles, and

if they ran that extra thirty-eight miles it would accommodate the people coming from Limerick Junction who have to wait an hour now at Charleville for this train. If passengers came by the train they would meet the connection from Mallow which would bring them to Cork, so that passengers would gain nearly two hours.

37102. Have you any complaints as regards charges, or are you satisfied with those?—I have not gone into that. Do you mean for passengers?

37103. Yes?—Well, no, except that I think the second class fare should be reduced considerably, and it would be a great advantage to the railway company if they reduced them.

37104. You think that by their reducing the second class fare to a figure more like the English rate at the Northern Counties rate, people who now go third class would travel second?—Yes; a great many would.

37105. Therefore, the railway companies would really benefit by the reduced rate?—Yes, I think so.

37106. Have you anything to say as regards platforms in your district?—Yes. The platforms are very low; in fact there is a drop of from two to two and a half feet in some cases.

37107. In getting out of the carriages?—In getting out of the carriages. It is dangerous for passengers, and very injurious for luggage.

37108. Have you ever brought that before the Department?—I brought it before the Department.

37109. The Department of Agriculture?—Yes.

37110. What did they do for you?—They told me that they got a favorable reply, that the matter would be attended to, but I have not seen anything done since.

37111. You did not remind them of their promise?—I did not.

37112. We have spoken about passenger traffic. As to goods, have you got fair rates from Cork?—The only thing I complain of is that they bring charges cheaper to Fermoy than to Castletownroche, although Fermoy is ten miles further on.

37113. You do not object to anything being carried cheaply, do you?—I did not go into the matter.

37114. I understood you to say that goods were carried more cheaply from Cork to Fermoy than to Castletownroche, which is ten miles shorter journey; what do you object to. Is it that Castletownroche pays too much?—I object to their carrying goods ten miles further and charging me more for a shorter distance. I cannot understand why they should do it.

37115. What about travellers north of Cork, have they anything to complain of?—Yes, with respect to the Bandon and South Coast line. The first train

Mr. James
Byrne, F.P.,
Castletown-
roche, County
Cork.

Suggested
reduction in
second class
passenger
fares.

The raising of
the passenger
platforms
recommended.

The statement
of the Depart-
ment of Agri-
culture re-
solved without
result.

Complaint as
to the charges
for goods from
Cork to Castle-
townroche and
to Fermoy.

The necessity
for an earlier
train from
Cork to con-
nect with the
Cork, Bandon
and South
Coast Railway.

Nov. 18, 1902.

Mr. James
Byrne, J.P.,
Castletown-
rocks, County
Cork.

Suggested
erection of
shelters at
country
stations.

Complaints as
to excessive
rates for cattle
by passenger
trains.

An improved
train service to
Castletown-
rocks, &c.,
a necessity for
the travelling
public.

The increased
cost to the
railway
company.

Increase in the
height of rail-
way platforms
caused in the
interest of
public safety.

reaches Cork at 9.20, whereas the train from Cork to Bandon starts at 8, so that when I or any other traveller wants to go we must go to Cork the night before, in order that we may go the other ten or twelve miles.

37116. Most people who come to the station have to drive a distance. What is your suggestion about having some sort of shelter there?—A great many carmen and people who bring their own to the station have told me that it would be a great convenience if shelter sheds were erected near the stations, and that they would be willing to pay for them, because they have to wait a long while sometimes, and in wet weather they and their horses are perished.

37117. Do you know any stations, except the main stations in Dublin and Belfast, where they have any shelter?—I do not know of any.

37118. Have they got them in England even?—I do not know.

37119. But whether they have them elsewhere or not, you think it would be a convenience in Ireland?—I merely mention that many of our proprietors consider them a great convenience and are willing to pay for them; they do not want them as a favour. There is another matter I wish to refer to, and that is with regard to the charges for pure-bred cattle which you wish to send by the quickest way, by passenger train. They will not charge for half-wagon loads. I am a short-horn breeder, and on several occasions I have had to pay very heavily for them on that account.

37120. Because you cannot send a full wagon load?—Yes.

37121. We have had considerable evidence from large exporters on that point, so we need not go into it now.

Examined by Mr. ACOWORTH.

37121. I quite understand that you would like to get the extra train from Limerick Junction to Mallow?—Yes, it is only thirty-eight miles.

37122. Only thirty-eight miles?—Yes.

37123. But the train, if it went those thirty-eight miles, would have to come back again, would it not?—I suppose so.

37124. It is most clearly. That is seventy-six miles. What do you suppose that would mean in money?—I do not know. But that district of the country is the most fertile in Ireland, or perhaps in the United Kingdom, and it is very badly served; you have to walk six or seven hours between two trains. I think that is very unfair.

37125. I am not denying that connections are inconvenient, but have you thought what it would cost?—No, I am no authority on that.

37126. Take it from me that it would cost the Railway Company £4 a day out of their pockets at a very moderate compensation. It is a good deal, is it not?—Yes.

37127. £1,200 a year?—Unless it brought more traffic, and the time of the public who travel should be considered.

37128. Of course. But if the Railway Company thought it would pay them they would do it now. Are the platforms you are complaining about specially low at one place, or is it generally the case with their platforms?—In several places.

37129. At these two or three places where they are lower than ordinary, or are they all too low?—They are nearly all too low; nearly all the old platforms are too low; the new platforms are put at the proper height.

37130. Do you suggest that where they are low they ought to be made higher?—I think so.

37131. Have you thought again what that would cost?—No.

37132. Level Piers.—Do you mean that they should be made higher in the interests of the safety of the public?—Yes, and to prevent injury to luggage, which is hung out three or four feet and broken.

37133. Mr. ACOWORTH.—Do you know that England, Scotland, and Ireland are the only countries in the world, except some of our colonies where they have any platforms at all; do you know that at every station on the Continent you get into the train from a platform about 6 inches high?—I have heard so.

37134. Have you thought about what these things are going to cost? Somebody has to pay the bill.—I cannot go into these matters, but the public should be protected.

37135. About the Fermoy business. Do you know that by Act of Parliament the Railway Company is bound to charge from Cork to Fermoy according to the way the crow flies and not according to the way the railway goes round by Castletownrocks? I think that Castletownrocks is as near Cork as Fermoy, I think it is about the same distance.

37136. Is that so?—Yes.

37137. I should not have thought so to look at the map?—It is fourteen Irish miles from Castletownrocks to Cork by road.

37138. How far is it from Cork to Mallow?—About twenty-one English miles.

37139. And how far to Castletownrocks—another six—about nineteen.

37140. Nineteen miles further?—No.

37141. How far is it from Mallow to Castletownrocks?—Six miles.

37142. It is twenty-seven miles from Cork to Castletownrocks by train?—Yes.

37143. Do you say it is fourteen Irish miles from Cork to Mallow as the crow flies?—Yes, or from Castletownrocks to Cork.

37144. And from Cork to Fermoy as the crow flies is fourteen?—About twenty-one miles, English.

37145. It is twenty-seven miles by railway they charge to Castletownrocks?—Yes.

37146. And it is twenty-one miles by Act of Parliament they are bound to charge to Fermoy, because the Act of Parliament says they are not to charge according to the distance by railway but according to the distance direct?—I did not know that.

37147. That is the explanation why the Fermoy charge is less?—I did not know that.

37148. Mr. SCOTCH.—That does not make it more satisfactory to you?—Not at all.

37149. Mr. ACOWORTH.—You do not like it, but the Fermoy people do, and they have got it into the Act of Parliament?—Carriers bring goods as cheaply to us as to Fermoy.

Mr. SCOTCH.—The fact that it is an Act of Parliament does not make it agreeable.

Mr. ACOWORTH.—I do not suppose it does, but it compels the railway company to do it.

Examined by Colonel HUTTONSON FOS.

37150. Your experience is that the high second-class fares have the effect of driving practically everyone except a few into the third-class carriages?—Yes, indeed.

37151. And you think that many of these, if they could get the better accommodation for a slight increase on the third-class fare, would be glad to pay that fare?—Yes; they would be delighted.

37152. So that it would probably involve no loss on the railway company?—It would be a gain to them.

37153. One other question. To run an extra train from Limerick Junction to Charleville and Mallow might mean an expenditure of £1,200 a year; whereas to make a connection between the Cork and Bandon line and the Great Southern and Western running into Cork, where it is only a matter of one hour leaving thirty minutes before the other gets in, would involve nothing like that expenditure; a little accommodation between the two companies would bring about that connection?—I think so.

37154. Has it ever been put before the Great Southern and Western or before the Cork and Bandon line that either the one or the other should accommodate its service so as to make the connection?—I spoke to one of the directors of the Cork and Bandon Railway, and he said that they could not run their train later than nine o'clock.

37155. It leaves Cork for Bandon at nine o'clock?—At nine o'clock.

37156. And the Great Southern and Western train gets in about 9.30?—Yes.

37157. Has the point been put before them so as to whether they could not manage to get there at, say, ten to nine?—I suppose it has.

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock.

SIXTIETH PUBLIC SITTING.—THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Office, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present.—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, Bart., Chairman; Right Hon. Lord FERRIS, M.C.; Sir HERBERT JEKILL, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON POSE, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; Mr. W. M. ACWORTH; and Mr. JOHN AUBREY FREDERICK ASPINALL;

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN called by the CHAIRMAN.

Nov. 14, 1907.

37158 I think you appear on behalf of the Drogheda Development Association?—Yes.

37159 What is that association?—It is a voluntary association of the merchants and traders of Drogheda.

37160 It is not incorporated?—It is registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts.

37161 Of course your association take great interest in the development of the trade of that port?—Yes; that is its chief object.

37162 Now, in your judgment, has anything occurred to affect the interests of that port?—Prior to the days of the railways Drogheda was a seaport, the natural inlet and outlet of a very large area of country westward, including portions of the Counties of Cavan, Longford, Louth, Westmeath and Meath, but owing to the way in which the railways were constructed, the Great Northern running north and south of Drogheda and the Midland running parallel to it about 1½ miles westward, it has resulted in diverting a great deal of the traffic from that port.

37163 Does not the Great Northern serve your port?—The Midland Great Western runs about 1½ miles inland, parallel to us, and it takes away a lot of the trade that used to come through the port of Drogheda.

Directly it is only the Great Northern that serves us.

37164 Originally it was the Dublin and Drogheda, was not it?—Yes, and it became amalgamated with a continuation to Belfast; but there is also a branch line of the Great Northern westward, to Navan and Oldcastle. Perhaps I might mention, sir, that there is a difficulty about railway connection from Drogheda to Trim at the bottom of the page.

37165 Trim is on the Midland?—Trim is on the Midland. It is an equal distance from Drogheda and Dublin—about 25½ or 30 miles—and some of our public and business men in Drogheda have business relations at Trim, but there is no train going from Drogheda to Navan in order to get to Trim till 2 minutes past ten, notwithstanding that a train leaves Drogheda at about 10 minutes past 8, carrying mails, but without any carriages for passengers. The result is that if a Drogheda man wants to go to Trim on business he has to drive from Navan to Trim, a distance of 7 miles, as there is no railway connection till four to three in the afternoon.

37166 I suppose that has been represented to the company?—It has.

37167 By your association?—By individual traders in Drogheda.

37168 And what has been the answer?—Nothing done.

37169 Then what do you suggest would meet that difficulty—an earlier train?—Garrigue put on the train which now conveys the mails from Drogheda at 8 o'clock.

37170 And by that train they would get to Trim at what time?—You could get to Trim before 11 then, easily.

37171 In other words, you could do business and get back easily to Drogheda?—Quite so.

37172 And there is a possibility of business transactions between the two places?—Undoubtedly.

37173 Well now, is there a proper rail connection with the quays at Drogheda?—There is no rail connection with the quays at Drogheda.

37174 How far is the railway from the quays?—About a mile up hill.

37175 And all traffic coming into the port or going out of the port has to be carted from the station to the quay?—Quite so.

37176 And that, of course, militates against the development of the port, I should think?—Very much so; and we say that the railway companies are not interested in allowing a railway connection to be made to the quays, because by not having one it enables them to get traffic over a longer mileage, taking the coal traffic, for instance, from Dublin, Dundalk and Rathfriland to places on the Oldcastle branch line.

37177 There has been a tendency, in your judgment, on the part of the Great Northern to divert traffic to another port where they have direct connection with the quay?—Quite so.

37178 And you think that is done with the object of getting longer mileage on the traffic?—That is what we believe. Now, our coal trade has decreased by 36 per cent. Taking the year 1882, we had a traffic of 52,995 tons.

37179 What year do you say?—1882, and it has decreased in every ten years since, and it is now only 37,338 tons. That is about 36 per cent reduction on the entire.

37180 How is the coal brought in?—It was done by sailing vessels. In the old days it was done by sailing vessels, and the difficulty was not so great then, but now it is done by tramp steamers.

37181 Then you think that if you had a rail connection with the quays the coal traffic could be developed into the interior of Ireland from Drogheda to the advantage of that port?—We think it ought to be, and not only to the advantage of the port, but to the advantage of the purchasers, inland, along this district, because, as a matter of fact, they are paying from 2 to 20 per cent. more on their coal traffic from the other ports than if the maximum rates from Drogheda to the same points were charged.

37182 What do you estimate the cost of cartage?—A shilling per ton.

37183 I suppose that is all round per ton?—A shilling a ton is the regular charge for coal cartage from the quay. And then there is an additional disadvantage, which is this. In the days of the old sailing vessels it did not matter so much, but not having railway communication alongside the quay, it costs 2d. more to discharge than if the wagons were there, because when the coal is filled into the buckets in the hold they will be slung there and tipped into the wagon for a shilling a ton; but by having to make a diversion of labour they are hauled on dock, they are emptied into sacks and then carried across a plank, and it adds 6d. a ton to the discharge.

37184 Do you mean that that largely increases the cost?—Rightly so, a ton.

37185 Mr. Acworth.—Why is it necessary, why cannot they tip into the cart, why don't you tip your buckets straight into the cart?—The vessels cannot be alongside the quay near enough to allow that, and it has to be planked accordingly.

37186 Then how can they tip into the railway trucks?—If there were railway connection the quays would be supported so that a vessel could get alongside like all other ports. They were built for sailing vessels originally.

Mr. George E. Shanahan, Representative of the Drogheda Development Association.

The absence of railway connection with the quays is a serious injury to the shipping trade of Drogheda.

The coal trade of the port has fallen off 36 per cent. since 1882.

The cost of cartage and the extra expenses of unloading vessels.

Nov. 24, 1907.

Mr. George de Belle Hill, Representative of the Drogheda Development Association,

Tables of actual coal rates to Great Northern Stations compared with the legal maximum rates handed in

37186. But it has nothing to do with the difference between carting and railway conveyance?—No.

37187. Chairman.—Is the harbour dry at low water?—No, never. Even the Lancashire and Yorkshire boats float there.

37188. What is the rate from Dublin to Navan for coal?—3s. 6d. per ton. If I might hand in tables* that I have prepared they show clearly not only the rates from Drogheda to the various places on the branch line, but also from Dublin and Dundalk, and they show that there are over the maximum rates charged on coal traffic from Drogheda in addition to the actual disadvantages of the cartage.

37189. What do you mean by over the maximum?—The rates on four-ton lots are over the maximum.

37190. Lord Pirrie.—Are those rates in the table book?—I am giving in the actual rates charged. Those are the actual rates charged. This table will show what the maximum rates should be to these different places, and then it shows the actual rates that are charged by the Great Northern Railway, which are really over the maximum for four-ton lots.

37191. Chairman.—But how do you get your rate for the use of the truck? You put it down at 4½d.?

—It is under twenty miles.

37192. Where did you get the 4½d. from?—From the traffic rates-book.

37193. They are allowed to charge more?—Yes, but the maximum in Class A, being under twenty miles, is 4½d.

37194. And is the maximum nominal 6d. 1.—Three-pence at each point as in the classification book. Also they are bound to take 4-ton lots and upwards under Class A; but as a matter of fact for 4-ton lots they charge over the maximum in order to force 6-ton lots to go.

37195. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—Surely that would work out differently. Take the first instance, 12 miles. Beaupre, that would want to be 15d. instead of 1s. 1d.

37196. Mr. Ascroft.—You worked it out on the assumption of a penny a mile, and they have a right to charge 14d.

37197. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—If you take the haulage it works out to 1s. 4d. instead of 1s. 1d., and in the next instance instead of 1s. 7d. it works out at 1s. 11d. by the actual maximum rate of 1.40 for the first 20 miles, so that I think there must be some little error here. And then for Oldcastle, 30 miles, it should be 3s. 8d. instead of 3s. 4d.

37198. Mr. Ascroft.—Fivepence more.

37199. Mr. Ascroft.—I have got these worked out for the first six distances. For Beaupre the maximum charge is 1s. 5d. instead of 1s. 1d.; for Navan, 2s. instead of 1s. 7d.; for Kells, 3s. 10d. instead of 2s. 4d.; for Virginia Road, 3s. 4d. instead of 2s. 10d.; for Oldcastle, 3s. 10d. instead of 3s. 4d.; and for Wilkinstown, 3s. instead of 2s. 2d.

37200. Chairman.—There there is no use in printing those figures.—There is some miscalculation, for which I am sorry.

37201. Mr. Ascroft.—It does not apply to the next two pages, does it?—I withdraw the first page.

37202. Lord Pirrie.—I am afraid they are all wrong.

37203. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—In the first on the next page, 48s. under should be 4s. 6d. instead of 4s. 1.—I think the same error runs through the lot.

37204. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—It is certainly in the second page.

37205. Mr. Ascroft.—The calculations are made out of some manual, not from the Act of Parliament, I think.—They are made out from the book, and there must have been some error.

37206. Mr. Ascroft.—Very likely you got the schedule of another company.—I think I had better withdraw them all, particularly as one depends on the other so much.

37207. Chairman.—At any rate, there is no dispute about one point, that the charge of cartage in Drogheda militates against the development of the coal trade there?—Undoubtedly. The rates that are mentioned in the proof are the actual rates.

37208. Oh, yes, the actual rates there is no dispute about?—Yes.

37209. But the comparison as to the powers is based upon a wrong calculation?—Yes.

37210. Now, with regard to the cattle traffic from the port, is there a large cattle traffic from Drogheda?

—There has been. For very many years it was one of the principal shipping ports, and up till four years ago the traffic was conveyed by a locally-owned steam-packet company, and it is said that the Railway Commission required a rate of a shilling per head more to be charged upon cattle from Drogheda than is charged from Dublin, which we look on as simply an object to assist in the diversion of traffic from our port to that of Dublin. The rates are practically the same, the head rates are practically the same to Liverpool from all places, that is, from Dublin, Dundalk, Drogheda, or Greenore.

37211. The rates to Liverpool are the same from all those places?—All the same.

37212. Are you talking of cattle now?—Yes, of cattle.

37213. Then how is Drogheda at a disadvantage?—The shipping company are bound to charge, I believe, a shilling per head more by an agreement amongst the shipping and railway companies at their conference, so that the rate from Drogheda to Liverpool on cattle is 7s. 6d. while the head rate from Dublin, I believe, is 6s. 1d.

37214. Which are the same?—The through rate.

37215. But there is no local railroads?—From Oldcastle, Kells, Navan.

37216. That would be on the through rates?—Yes.

37217. Then the rates are the same there?—Yes.

37218. But you said from Drogheda itself?—But Drogheda itself does export cattle.

37219. Locally?—Yes, we have a large and very rich cattle district immediately around.

37220. Does the traffic come in by rail?—No; the local traffic will be worked in.

37221. Then on that traffic you say the rate is more from Drogheda than from Dublin?—A shilling a head more, which we say enables the railway companies to carry the traffic away from us without losing as much as if the shipping rates were equal.

37222. Mr. Ascroft.—You gave the figure from Dublin as 6s. 1d. to 6s. 1d.

37223. That is 1s. 5d. of a difference?—Well, they are bound to charge a shilling.

37224. And in fact charge 1s. 5d.?—Those are the rates, 6s. 1d. and 6s. 10d., at the Company's risk, from Dublin.

37225. And is the 7s. 6d. the Company or the owner's?—The owner's.

37226. 7s. 6d. is the owner's risk rate, and 6s. 10d. is the company's risk rate?—Yes.

37227. Lord Pirrie.—That is only cross-Channel traffic, as compared with Dublin to Liverpool?—Yes.

37228. Chairman.—Is Drogheda injuriously affected in any other way with regard to this cattle traffic?—Take the Scotch traffic. When the old Steamship Company was in existence we used to have occasional services between Glasgow and Drogheda, and those were very beneficial to the traders, inasmuch as they were able to get back their requirements at very much lower rates than the existing rates via Dublin or via Belfast from Glasgow. The Great Northern Railway would not, when that service was running, give any through rates to facilitate cattle going from Glasgow, and, as we believe, to prevent the possibility of a service between Drogheda and Glasgow being practicable, the rates on cattle from Oldcastle, Kells, Drogheda, and the surrounding districts there about Kells, via Belfast, are made so low that the Company could not carry them successfully from Drogheda. We do not object on behalf of the cattle interest to low rates, but what we do object to is that these rates are made specially low, as we believe, solely for the purpose of preventing the development of a traffic from the port of Drogheda, and it militates against the merchants of Drogheda in this way, that, not having an outward cargo, we are forced to pay on all our inward traffic very high rates via Dublin, compared with what we could have it for if we had it direct. For instance, take hardware. The rate by Belfast to Drogheda or Dublin to Drogheda is 2s. 3d. per ton. In the days of the old steamers running the rate was 15s.

37229. Was there a regular service of steamers between Drogheda and Glasgow?—An occasional regular service, once a month or something like that. It was able to get us in all our supplies when necessary

But withdrawn on account of error in compilation

The cartage charges militates against the development of the coal trade

* Subsequently withdrawn on account of error in the compilation. (See 37196.)

37223. You kept back your orders till a steamer ran?—Yes, but it is a gain to the Great Northern to have the traffic routed by the longer route. They get nearly double, in fact more, because they would not get anything if it came direct.

37224. What because of the old company?—It was bought up by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company in 1902.

37225. And since then there has been no regular steamer between Drogheda and Glasgow?—About eighteen months ago the Drogheda Development Association chartered boats occasionally, but only for inward traffic. And we have gone back to the old rates now, but of course we have met with a good deal of opposition from the Great Northern Company in holding out inducements to traders not to support that boat. Sugar they were charging 16s 6d a ton for.

37226. From where?—From Glasgow and Greenock.

37227. To Drogheda?—To Drogheda.

37228. By Belfast?—By Belfast or Dublin. We were carrying it for 10s. 6d.

37229. By direct steamer?—Direct steamer. The Great Northern gave a special offer to a trader in Drogheda for three months that they would carry his sugar for 10s. 6d. in order to prevent him giving the traffic to the steamer. We say that the 10s. 6d. rate ought to be a fixture now. We do not mind returning to not having a boat. If we get our rates at the same rate as that we have done something.

37230. Mr. Weston.—Your rate is?—10s. 6d.

37231. Chairman.—You fixed that rate yourself?—We fixed that rate.

37232. Now about this 10s. 6d. for three months to a Drogheda trader, have you any objection to give the name of the trader—say yes or no just whichever you like?—I will show you the letter, but there is a feeling, whether it is right or whether it is wrong that anybody who interferes with the wishes and desires of the railway companies in Ireland is punished. There is a very strong feeling everywhere to that effect. (Letter handed by Witness to Chairman.)

37233. You have no authority to give the name?—Well, sir, I have a request not to do so, if possible, but I will, if necessary, and if any good can come of it. One point is that that rate having been quoted ought to be the permanent rate given; that it is the publication of a rate.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—We should like to see the letter, if we could.

Witness.—There would be no objection if we could have an undertaking that that rate would be the rate all round.

37234. Lord Purie.—You would show it on that condition; they accept that, don't they?

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—We, think, sir, if you see the letter, we should see it. That is all we say.

Witness.—A public Commission have been shown that from the railway company.

37234. Chairman.—Mr. Barrington, it is a perfectly authentic letter of the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland to a trader in Drogheda, quoting a rate exactly as Mr. Ball has told us, exactly.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—Well, of course, we would like to know the date of the letter, and we would like to know the circumstances, and, in fact, to look it up fully. That is all I can say, sir.

37235. Chairman.—The Great Northern must know all about this.

37235a. Mr. Weston.—The witness ought to consider whether the promotion of the object of the Drogheda Development Association—that the rate of 10s. 6d. should be made the permanent rate—would not be assisted by the publication of this letter.

Mr. Charles Barrington, Solicitor.—Can you give us the date of it? would that be asking too much?

37235. Chairman.—The 13th of February, 1905. That is all we can give. I do not think we ought to mention any names at all. Do you know if any similar offer has been made to any other trader?—I have not been able to get evidence of it.

37237. Lord Purie.—The other traders who have got it have not told you?—No.

37238. Chairman.—There is a steamer running?—Yes, and sugar that ought to have come by our last was captured en route and delivered in Drogheda at its regular charge, 16s. 6d.

37239. Mr. Weston.—What steamer is this?—The Development Association's.

37240. They have ceased to run?—They have.

37241. Chairman.—The coasting steamer?—It is a direct boat.

37242. A direct steamer running to Glasgow. Well, you have made a statement which is perfectly clear, and this letter absolutely corroborates it. I will give you back the letter. (Letter handed back to witness.)—I have other evidence of rates which were quoted during the existence of the coasting service, which I should like to hand in later. We want to raise the point of the publication of the rates. I suppose that the rates could not be raised.

37243. Have you taken any steps to see whether that particular rate was put in the rate-book?—I have not. If I might mention it before we have the question of the steamer and the traffic, there are many things bound up one with another. For instance, the loss of coal traffic to us in Drogheda means not only the loss of so much trade coming into the port, so much revenue and so much labour, but it had also resulted in the impossibility of carrying out a very valuable industry which employed over a hundred men, namely, the export of limestone from Drogheda to Glasgow, Ardrossan, and Ayr. There were over 100 men employed in that limestone trade a few years ago. Now there are only half-a-dozen. We cannot get boats to take it back. So long as the old sailing vessels were in existence they always took the stone back, and now steamers come in so seldom, just to leave a little coal, and away, that there is no regular trade developed, and consequently the Welsh people have got all that traffic.

37244. But you cannot put that on the shoulders of the railway company?—Only inasmuch as the traffic being diverted from the port in any way, one thing helps to kill the others.

37245. Only in that way indirectly?—Indirectly.

37246. Now, let us see how we get on any further. With regard to stone cattle, I think you said just now that there used to be very large cattle traffic in Drogheda, and it is a diminishing quantity?—It is rather a diminishing quantity.

37247. Now, do you blame the railway companies for that?—We can blame the railway company for the Scotch portion of it.

37248. We have done with the Scotch portion?—No, with the Liverpool.

37249. It must be the stone cattle?—The stone cattle were chiefly for Scotland, but at one period of the year there is also a traffic in stone cattle going by the Lancashire and Yorkshire to Norwich.

37250. That is what I thought. It was the Eastern counties they principally went to?—In the last few years the Scotchmen have been buying up stones from our district much more freely. In fact their competition was so keen that there was not so much going to Norwich.

37251. But there is no doubt that the bulk of that cattle traffic now goes to Belfast?—All by Belfast, owing to the specially low rate.

37252. Although the cattle are reared in the immediate vicinity, practically in the neighbourhood of Drogheda?—Yes, and are coming practically past it all along the branch line from Oldcastle and Kells.

37253. At any rate that is in consequence of there being no regular service of steamers existing between Drogheda and Glasgow?—That is so, and would not exist anywhere else if it were not for the facilities the railway companies give for lashing them to other ports.

37254. Now, when the old Drogheda Steam Packet Company was in existence, had they through rates with the Great Northern?—To Liverpool, yes, but not to Glasgow.

37255. Not to Glasgow?—But there were no through rates from any station on the Midland system, that is King'scourt, Kilmestown Wood, and other places, beyond Navan, notwithstanding that Drogheda was nearer to those points.

37256. I suppose you point, and what you believe to be true, is that an effort was made by the railway companies to divert the traffic from Drogheda through Belfast, and the rates were fixed so as to encourage that traffic. That is your statement?—That is so, sir.

37257. That is your statement, put briefly?—It is.

37258. And you believe that is true?—Yes.

Nov. 14, 1905.

Mr. George de Bolla Ball,
Representative
of the Drogheda
Development
Association.

The right of
the Great
Northern Rail-
way Company
to divert to
other routes
traffic for the
purpose of
loading off its
commodities.

The chairman
of the
drogheda
of coal from the
port on local
industries.

The cattle
traffic to Scot-
land diverted
to Belfast and
Dublin from
the Drogheda
route by pre-
ferred rates.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. George de Bolla Ball,
Representative of the
Drogheda
Lancashire and
Yorkshire
Railway
Company.Sailors taking
all in the port
of Drogheda
were the
acquisition of
the local steam-
ship company by the Lancashire and
Yorkshire
Railway
Company.

37260. Mr. Asworth.—And the Midland, I suppose, not through Belfast, but through Dublin?—Through Dublin.

37261. Chairman.—At any rate was not it away from Drogheda?—Through Drogheda is very much nearer in point of distance.

37262. I think the service has been much improved since the Lancashire and Yorkshire took it over?—Instead of being improved, our sailings have been reduced from four or five sailings a week down to two.

37263. Lord Pirrie.—Two sailings each way?—Two sailings each way. This has very seriously affected the revenue of the port. If I might I would hand this to—

37264. Chairman.—Just take 1901, the net tonnage?—In 1901 the net tonnage was 26,949.

37265. Give it us for the last year, 1906?—22,051.

37266. That is rather a large decrease?—37.1 per cent. of a decrease from the contribution towards the revenue of the port.

37267. Mr. Seaton.—Almost exactly one-third?—One-third.

37268. Chairman.—Now take the harbour dues paid in 1901?—22,508 14s. 6d.

37269. Just give the pounds. What were the cargo dues?—£618.

37270. Give us the corresponding figures for 1906?—£1,551 harbour dues and £505 cargo dues.

37271. Kindly give us the total revenue in 1901?—£4,055, the total port revenue.

37272. That was the total port revenue, but the total revenue paid for harbour dues and cargo dues added together amounted to £3,011.

37273. And in 1906?—£2,056.

37274. Now you can give us the total port revenue for the place in 1901?—£4,055.

37275. And in 1906?—£2,056. Might I mention that in 1901 the revenue derived from that cross-Channel service with the old company was 74 per cent. of the total revenue of the port. I have not got it now, because we have the coasting steamer service and the other Glasgow in for the last two years, which I do not give separately. I did not analyse them.

37276. Lord Pirrie.—Now that the coasting service has been given up, your dues will be so much less for 1907?—Quite so.

Chairman.—If you do not object, we will hand these figures in.

TABLE ILLUSTRATING THE DECREASE IN REVENUE PAID TO THE PORT OF DROGHEDA—LIVERPOOL STEAMER SERVICE SINCE ITS ACQUISITION BY THE LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY COMPANY.

Year.	Net Tonnage.	Harbour Dues.	Cargo Dues.	Total Revenue.	Percentage of Decrease.	Total Port Revenue.	Percentage of Total Revenue.	—
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.		
1901	26,949	22,508 14 6	612 12 1	2,611 7 7	—	4,055 16 5	100	Last complete year prior to purchase by L. & Y. Co.
1902	27,018	2,015 10 4	851 5 3	2,866 15 8	—	3,062 12 5	—	Service run partly by old company and partly by L. & Y. Co.
1903	26,007	1,917 5 5	677 5 10	2,595 6 4	6.2	2,866 16 4	—	First complete year by L. & Y. Co.
1904	24,051	1,795 11 5	459 7 5	2,255 10 4	12.96	2,595 2 10	—	
1905	24,051	1,661 15 4	322 8 7	1,984 4 1	12.18	1,987 5 4	—	
1906	22,051	1,551 14 5	505 0 1	2,056 5 7	31.71	2,056 0 3	—	Subsidy reduced in December to 25 weekly.

COMPARISON FOR FIRST SIX MONTHS, YEAR 1907.

Two sailings per week

	Total Revenue	Percentage of Decrease.
1901—Corresponding Six Months to June, .	1,444 7 3	—
1907	551 6 3	61.83

(Unsuccessful attempt of the Harbour Commissioners to fix increased rates)

37276. Mr. Asworth.—I suppose the basis of charge has not been altered?—No. The Drogheda Harbour Commissioners endeavoured to charge 50 per cent. of the gross, but the Lancashire and Yorkshire knocked them out on that point. They applied for a Provisional Order.

37277. They tried to raise it, and the Lancashire and Yorkshire succeeded in stopping them?—That is so.

37278. They did not change it, they only tried to change it?—Quite so.

Mr. Seaton.—The general revenue of the port, apart from that contributed by the Lancashire and Yorkshire appears to have increased by 2500 between 1906 and 1905.

Lord Pirrie.—That was due to the starting of the coasting steamer.

37279. Mr. Seaton.—What was the cause of that? The total revenue in the first of those two columns was £3,000 in 1901 and £4,000 in the other column for the total port revenue. That is a difference of £1,000. In the last year the total revenue in the first of the columns was £2,900, and the total port revenue £3,500, a difference of £1,500. What caused the increase of the revenue, apart from what the Lancashire and Yorkshire paid? The total revenue has not been increased as compared with 1901. It is £3,500, but it shows that the difference between the total port revenue now and what the Lancashire and Yorkshire paid is greater than the difference in 1901 by £200 a year?—Well, the coasting service returns were in 1906, also that extra Glasgow service that we had running.

37280. But now that the coasting service has disappeared, what will be the effect; will the revenue apart from the Lancashire and Yorkshire, be as small as it was before, in 1901?—Yes, quite so. There will be £200 a year less this year.

37281. Mr. Asworth.—I notice that the first complete year of the Lancashire and Yorkshire, the harbour dues paid by that Company are down £200, from £3,425 to £3,217?—Yes.

37282. Do you see that?—Yes.

37283. Surely the Lancashire and Yorkshire, to begin with, increased the service, did not they?—No, never increased it.

37284. Mr. Seaton.—The Lancashire and Yorkshire Company had four services a week?—Only two. First they gave four. Next year they took off one and left on three, and last December they took off another and left on only two.

37285. Mr. Asworth.—But they ran bigger boats?—They ran bigger boats.

37286. Would not they pay more dues?—I do not think so. It puzzles me how they have gone down.

37287. Lord Pirrie.—The old boats there were large tonnage, and the new boats were small tonnage.

37288. Mr. Asworth.—I see.

37289. Mr. Seaton.—Together with the reduction of the service?—Yes.

37290. What service did you get the revenue for?—They put on two new boats that year, the "Colleen" and the "McIlfont," and their tonnage was not used on the modern idea.

37291. Better than the old ones?—On the modern idea.

Explanation of the increase in the revenue of the port in 1906 apart from the Lancashire and Yorkshire (L. & Y.) was Company's pay—

37280. Chairman.—Now, I suppose you will agree, that the boats are much better than they used to be?—The boats are improved undoubtedly.

37281. Have not there been new starters put on?—There were two boats, but one was taken away after a few months, and we have only had the benefit of one, that being the "Colleen" boat. The other one has been put on the Gaelic and Continental service.

37282. On the East coast?—The East coast.

37283. Now, you come to the conclusion that the purchase of the old company by the Lancashire and Yorkshire, instead of being a benefit to Drogheda, has been an injury to the port?—Undoubtedly.

37284. That is your view?—And we believe further that it was in contravention of promises, not only to the public, but to Parliament, at the time powers were sought. I have got an extract here from evidence given by the general manager of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company at the time they were asking for power to purchase these steamers, and in that evidence he clearly shows his knowledge that if the services were not improved and the facilities made better, the traffic would be diverted from Drogheda elsewhere. Notwithstanding the possession of that foregone, the results have proved that the services have been reduced, and our traffic has been going away from us, and it is very difficult to get traffic back once it has gone. The Association, I may mention, ask me to press this point on the Commission, so as if anything could be done to meet upon the conditions existing at the time of the taking over of the service by the Lancashire and Yorkshire being carried out. There were four sailings then, and the evidence that was given clearly indicated that in the opinion of the Lancashire and Yorkshire, four were insufficient; yet we have been left with two. We have no means of getting at what is behind the scenes, but the common assumption is that an agreement has been entered into between the London and North Western and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Companies, and that there is some sort of pooling arrangement between them, so that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company lose nothing, owing to the fact that they are getting less traffic from the port, but that it is merely remote, we cannot prove it.

37285. Tell me, for the information of the Commission, why did the old Company want to give up business and transfer their business to another company?—Outside opinion is that the thing was engineered. There was a change in directors and secretaries, and so on, a year or two before.

37286. Did the old company pay?—It was paying right up to the end of its existence.

37287. Of course, the accounts were published?—They were.

37288-9. Have you got any accounts?—I have not, but I am sure I could obtain the publication of them.

37290. At any rate, it was not a bankrupt company?—Not at all, they were quite as solvent as ever.

37291. Colonel Hutchinson Fox?—They were not paying 2s per cent?—They were paying something, and had £11,000 behind still in reserve.

37292. They had?—Yes; there was nothing like bankruptcy. They wanted reorganisation and improvement.

37293. Chairman.—So much, I think, for the Lancashire and Yorkshire. With regard to the Great Northern Company, you have no reason to doubt their bona fides in doing what they can to develop traffic through Drogheda?—We think they do everything they can to attract our customers away from the trade of the town.

37294. In what way do you suggest that they can do it?—They give special facilities every day after mid-day, special fares at single fares to Dublin from Drogheda, and from all stations between Drogheda and Dublin—every day in the week for many years past; whereas they give no facilities to people coming from anywhere between Dublin and Drogheda, into Drogheda to do their shopping there.

37295. Is not the capital of the country the attraction?—That may be; but the fact of the stream of passengers coming to the capital of the country draws other parts of the country from getting their due proportion of the trade; it is not a legitimate action to take our customers away and give us no others in their place.

37306. Are there no market tickets from certain of the stations to Drogheda?—Only on Saturdays.

37307. When are the market tickets issued to Dublin?—Every day in the week.

37308. Can you illustrate that by figures? What is the ordinary third class return ticket?—4s.

37309. What is the special ticket issued every day?—2s 6d.

37310. Is that during the competition only?—No, that has been going on since I was a boy.

37311. The ordinary third class fare is 4s. return, but every day there is a cheap ticket?—By every train after twelve o'clock.

37312. To return by any train?—To return by any train.

37313. By any train stopping at Drogheda?—They all stop at Drogheda.

37314. What you suggest is that for places contiguous to Drogheda there should be cheap tickets issued to Drogheda, so that the country people could market at Drogheda instead of Dublin?—Equal facilities. If they give a cheap ticket from Drogheda after twelve o'clock, they ought to do similarly from every place within ten or fifteen miles.

37315. To Drogheda?—Yes. That would give our traders a chance of doing some part of their legitimate business, instead of taking customers from them.

37316. You referred to the old coasting service, and we have had evidence from other witnesses about it. I do not know whether you have anything to add to it, have you?—The coasting service which Mr. Barton asked you about just now?—It was a most useful service to the traders, not only of Drogheda, but also of Berry, Cokesburg, Belfast, Newry, Dundalk, Wicklow, Wexford and Dublin. Traders all along the coast could reduce rates very considerably. Prior to its existence the railway rates in operation in some cases were prohibitive to any business being done. We have an oilseed industry in Drogheda, which is one of the oldest and most valuable.

37317. We had a witness on that point; we had the head of the firm?—He is also a member of the Association.

37318. Is that coasting steamer running now?—No; that service ceased to run last August; it was forced off by the railway.

37319. In other words, the Railway Company tried to kill the traffic of the steamer?—They tried to kill the traffic.

37320. And made special rates to meet the competition?—They did more than that.

37321. What did they do more?—If they simply made special rates to meet the competition, it would not matter; it is exactly what we want, to bring the rates down to a reasonable level, but when they give special rates in order to take that traffic away and force off the competition, we say they should not be allowed to raise the rates afterwards for at least a period of ten years.

37322. I think my friend, Mr. Acworth, will deal with that. At any rate, the rates that were put into operation to meet the competition of the steamer were cancelled, and the higher rates were put into operation after the coasting steamer ceased to run?—That is so.

37323. You might give us just one case, if you have got one there with reference to a special rate during the time of the competition and what took place afterwards. Have you got any figures before you? One or two cases would be sufficient. Take the case that I have got here—that mailing firm that you referred to just now of Drogheda. They found a market during the existence of the steamer service at Wexford?—That is so.

37324. For their mailing products?—But there was no rate in existence before the steamer service, because they had not commenced that business; therefore there is no comparison. I have handed you a document, 9s. 3d., the old rate for that was 14s.

37325. We can mention this. From Dublin to Drogheda, one hundred of whisky, 5 cwt., rate 9s. 3d. Was that during the competition?—During the competition.

37326. What is the rate now; or the rate before the competition and the rate now, if you have got it? You see the point of my question?—Quite so. The actual rate charged on the same class of goods since would be 14s. 6d.

Nov 14, 1907.

Mr. George de Bolla Ball,
Representative of the
Drogheda Development
Association.

Suggested
cheap afternoon
return
tickets to
Drogheda
from stations
within a
radius of
fifteen miles.

The action of
the Great
Northern
Railway
Company in
reducing rates
to kill the
coasting
steamer
competition,
and thus re-
sulting in the
old rates.

Suggestion
that such
rates should
not be raised
for ten years.

Comparison
of rates for
whisky
during and
after the
coasting
steamer
competition.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. George de
Belle Hall,
Representative
of the
Drogheda
Development
Association.

Complaint as
to confusion
from the
railway
vouchers of
the rates
charged.

Comparison
of rates for
parcels during
and after the
coasting
steamer
competition.

Action of
the Great
Northern
Company in
offering
exceptionally
low rates to
a Drogheda
firm to secure
traffic.

Crossing
of Drogheda
traders by the
Great
Northern
Company
during the
steamer com-
petition.

37327. Here is the same thing. Here is whisky carried in October, 1907, the same quantity, and the rate is—what?—It is really 14s. 6d.; it works out to that.

37328. It works out to 14s. 6d.—If you look over those vouchers you will find that in very few of them is any rate quoted at all. That is one of the grievances that I have to bring before the Commission.

37329. Is that the usual thing at Drogheda?—It is the usual thing at Drogheda.

37330. When the rate has been given, it will be taken as publication, and the rates cannot be raised?—I am of that opinion.

37331. Is the insertion of rates in the rate column exceptional?—It is exceptional.

37332. I suppose you did not take any steps to ascertain whether the rate was in the rate-book from Navan?—Personally I have not, but I have had inquiries made, and there is no such rate in the rate-book. I would like to hand in another one, 4s. 8d. on stout during the time of the competition.

37333. Mr. Sexton.—Dublin to Drogheda?—Usual rate, 6s. 8d., Dublin to Drogheda.

37334. Chairman.—Here the rate is mentioned. This is in May, also 1906?—cheap rate, Dublin stout, 4s. 8d. per ton?—That is right.

37335. Mr. Ascroft.—Could you tell me when did the steamer begin to run?—November, 1906.

37336. Because I have got a rate here, also for whisky, about half a ton, quoted as 7s. 4d. That would be the rate in September, 1906. That is immediately before.

37337. Chairman.—Take this porter case: during the competition 4s. 8d. per ton, after the competition for 8d. per ton?—That is so. Here is another one, flour rate.

37338. Well, I will take that?—Before the competition, over five tons, six tons were 6s.

37339. And here it is charged 4s. 8d. That is one of the few instances in which they could quote the rate in the rate column.

37340. Lord Pirrie.—But they give the rate here as a cheap rate?—That is very exceptional.

37341. Not the other one. You have given the idea that where it is a cheap rate they quote it, and where it is a dear rate they do not quote it?—I have had some trouble to hunt this up. I do not find them everywhere.

37342. Mr. Sexton.—It is like advertising a reduction in price and saying nothing about the increase. What did the rate become after the competition?—It was up to 4s. then. They offered one trader in Drogheda who consigned, I think, an 18-ton lot, that for 37 tons they would charge him 4s. 8d., and if he would guarantee he would give all his traffic for two years, they would have given him the 4s. rate. That does not seem to me a legitimate proposal for the railway company to make. I do not mind giving the name; it is Christopher Tynes and Co., Ltd.

37343. They offered him a 4s. 3d. rate?—They offered him a 4s. 3d. rate for a 30-ton lot, and they would have given a 4s. rate if he would have given a contract to send all his traffic for two years.

37344. Chairman.—Any quantity he chose, to work all his traffic?—All his traffic for two years. They had been doing that to get the traffic from the steamer.

37345. Colonel Hutchinson, Psc.—I suppose they would give the same facility and the same rate to other traders if they had been there?—I should say they give it to everybody in the town.

37346. Chairman.—At any rate it was a special rate to a special firm?—That is so.

37347. For a special quantity. I do not know that there is anything wrong in that.

37347a. Mr. Sexton.—First of all, offering him a special rate, and, in addition to that, a further reduction for the whole traffic.

37348. Lord Pirrie.—If he gave all the traffic in respect of quantity, he would bring it down to 4s.

37349a. Chairman.—At any rate now the steamer has ceased to run. Prior to the advent of that steamer service, were the Drogheda traders crossed by the Great Northern Company for their traffic in any way?—We never saw a Great Northern steamer in a ship in Drogheda at all previously, before the steamer service, but during its existence some of the traders actually threatened to kick them out, they became so persistent and annoying.

37349. Before the service there was no necessity?—No, they would hardly attend even to the smallest complaint.

37350. When that coasting steamer was in operation, and brought the traffic into Drogheda from stations within twenty miles of Drogheda, were any through rates arranged by the railway companies?—No, they refused to give any through rates at Drogheda, and also at Derry, Belfast, and other places. I have got a letter here from the Midland Railway Company, if I might read it.

37351. What is the date of it?—22d. October, 1906.

37352. That was when the steamer was running?—That was when the steamer was running. It is from the agent at Derry to the owners of the coasting steamers: "We enclose you a letter we had received from the Midland Railway Company here, and shall be glad to hear from you on the matter."—"Dear Sirs,—I beg to inform you that in future we will not pay out any charges on goods consigned to stations on this line from the Coasting Steamships, Limited.—Yours truly (Signed), James Cundy."

37353. Who is that?—That is the agent at Londonderry.

Chairman.—The agent of the Midland.
Mr. Sheehan.—The Midland (Northern Counties) Committee, not the Midland Great Western.
Lord Pirrie.—It is not the Midland Great Western.
Witness.—No, the Midland (Northern Counties)—the Derry agent.

37354. Chairman.—They would not pay out any charges?—They would not pay out any charges.

37355. That is nothing to do with through rates?—They would not give through rates, but they would have facilitated the traffic by collecting.

37356. Charging forward the steamer charges?—Yes, anything we had sent from Glasgow over to Oldcastle we had to send a man specially to get it; they would only show their own rate from Drogheda to Oldcastle on the dock; we had to specially furnish the account for the steamer part.

37357. I suppose your Association are of opinion that the railway companies, taking Drogheda—I am only speaking of Drogheda—are not doing all they can to develop the trade through that particular port. That is the opinion of your Association?—We believe the trade belonging to that particular district, or any other district in Ireland, should not be injured by the action of a railway company under Act of Parliament. They have got Parliamentary powers to enter for the requirements of the public, and it should not be done at the expense of the property, labour, and trade in one district to the advantage of another.

37358. In other words, that there should be practically equal treatment to the various ports?—That is so; that is all that we would ask.

37359. With regard to the mineral traffic and mineral resources of the country, what minerals there do you refer to?—Close to Drogheda we have a very large quantity of the very richest limestone suitable for the foundry work and blast furnaces in Scotland, up through County Cavan and County Leitrim there is a very large volume of peat, coal, and iron; we believe that the districts between Drogheda and through the Counties Cavan and Leitrim could be best served by a railway running from the port at Drogheda.

37360. Of course that could not be developed without a regular steamer service?—The mineral traffic would be developed more by cargo steamers, general chartered boats, as a rule. The point that we wanted to make about the minerals at this point is that, that the volume of traffic in Ireland is so relatively small in the absence of any mineral traffic.

37361. Yes?—The Board of Trade returns for 1906 would show that in England the volume of traffic consists of 2 tons 6 cwt. 3 qrs. of minerals per train mile; in Scotland 2 tons 15 cwt. 3 qrs. of minerals per train mile, and in Ireland only 1 cwt. 3 qrs.

37362. Mr. Sexton.—About one-sixteenth of England and about one-seventh of Scotland?—Yes, and, as a matter of fact, last year, in the 1906 returns, it only works out to 7 cwt. for Ireland, whereas England has an increase to 2 tons 5 cwt. 2 qrs., and Scotland 2 tons 14 cwt. 1 qr.

37363. The proportion of merchandise being practically about the same in all three countries?—Practically the same.

37394. The great disparity is in minerals.—The great disparity is in minerals.

37395. Chairman.—Has the Development Association given any attention to any districts that could have an industry developed if there was more railway accommodation?—Through the Counties of Cavan and Leitrim.

37396. Could you tell us briefly what scheme you have considered?—Roughly, that is it—that line line (leading in a plane).

37397. Just put it in words, will you, to go on the route?—A line from Droghda via Bellefleur, Bellefleur, Ballinamore, and County Leitrim.

37398. And terminating where?—Terminating at Mullaghmore on the North-west coast. That would go through the centre of Leitrim in its greatest length and through the centre of the Connaught mineral area.

37399. Mr. Seaton.—Angus and that district?—Well, Angus is on the west side of Lough Allen; it would connect with it, but it is proposed to go on the east side. It has been reported upon by the Railway Commission in 1885 as to the quantities of iron and coal in that part of the country. I think that report gave twenty million tons as the deposits of coal. It has frequently been exploited and examined by other people, but it is impossible to do anything with it without proper railway facilities.

37400. Chairman.—You do not suggest, I suppose, that a line like that would ever be made if it had to be provided by private individuals?—It would be an impossibility. It is quite evident that in recent years in Ireland there is no money to develop anything of that kind.

37401. Therefore it would have to be done by State aid in some form or other?—In some form.

37402. You do not think the Government would agree to incur any liability?—We do not think it is a sound principle to ask them to guarantee capital over which they have no control. We have a very powerful instance of that in the Cavan and Leitrim line, and we have thought that it might be done in another way, that is, that the County Councils should have power under the extension of the Local Government Act to enable them to raise capital, borrow the money, and build and construct that line themselves, putting a rate equitably over the entire area, and we work out the cost. It would depend upon being able to get a private company to get the capital to work that line and pay real to the counties for the use of it. In that way they would have the controlling influence over their own money, and we believe the rate would not exceed 4d. in the pound; but under the guarantee system as it now exists, they guarantee money on capital raised by speculation, as a rule, and they have absolutely no control over it. I might be permitted to mention the disadvantages under which some of these districts have laboured for want of railway facilities, and the burden that is imposed upon the small producers. I would like to give some particulars of Swanlinbar district, which we are that we propose to take in. I refer to it in the proof, that there is a loss in one district of at least £7,000 a year by reason of the cost of collection and forwarding owing to the absence of railway facilities; at the same time, that district is paying 6d. in the pound on the capital of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway, and they have to bear the burden of 5s. a ton cartage on all incoming necessaries as well. I have got those figures from the principal exporters of produce in that district, it is a very large district, it takes in a radius of about ten miles for collection purposes, and the output of eggs is £50 tons in the year, 375 tons of poultry, live and dead, and 75 tons of butter. That poultry is chiefly exported to Liverpool and Manchester, the rates being 4s. 3d. and 4s. 4d. a hundred via Glenties; the eggs are chiefly exported to Glasgow, the rate being 3s. 6d. a ton at owner's risk, the cartage in all cases 5s. a ton by rail. The exporters have asked the Great Northern Railway and the Cavan and Leitrim Railway for through rates on poultry to Glasgow, but unavailingly. The existing rate is 6s. per cwt., which is double what it is to Manchester—more than double what it is to Manchester. One of the exporters has business in the trade at Glasgow, and could considerably enhance business if he could get an equitable through rate, but he has failed to do so.

37403. Mr. Atterd.—Is that 8s. rate via Derry or Belfast, or both?—It is put on rail. I do not think the exporter has any choice in the matter.

37404. Do not you know whether it is through Derry or through Belfast?—No, I could not say.

37405. Chairman.—At any rate, that is the rate they quote?—That is the rate they quote for Glasgow; they give no lower rate.

37406. It is half that rate to Manchester?—It is 4s. 3d. to Manchester. That is a hamper rate, too. It includes the use of the London and North Western hamper. The exporters state that if they had railway facilities in the district they could pay three-pence a hundred more on eggs, which would be equal to over £3,275 a year; twopence a head on poultry, equal to £3,750, and a halfpenny a pound more on butter, which would be equal to £364. There is in the district what they call a pork trade. The men who live in the mountains round about have to bring down the dead pig in a crock on a donkey's back to the low level. They are all collected at Swanlinbar by carters, and the nearest market they have is sixteen miles at Enniskillen. The cost that each man has to pay is a shilling per pig for cartage into Enniskillen, and he then has to come down from his place in the mountains and walk into Enniskillen along with the owner to look after the selling of the pig in the market. In the winter time, when the frost is laid, the pigs suffer great injury from frost, and have often to be sold at a depreciated price in the market at Enniskillen. The lowest average that has been put on expenses incurred on the sale of the pigs is 6s. a head. The average trade of the district is 6,200 pigs a year, and that would work out at a loss of £1,800; so that, putting these figures along with the loss on eggs, poultry, and butter, it comes to £7,900 a year. That they practically pay for want of a railway.

37407. And with the railway there are opportunities for enormous development?—For great development.

37408. Mr. Seaton.—Have you named the district?—That is Swanlinbar. In the Down and Droghda districts I find practically the same conditions in existence. The cartage rates from the nearest railway station at each of these places are 5s. a ton; there I was unable to get as close a figure from the exporters, but they agree that they could give the same extra price per head for poultry and three-pence a hundred more for eggs if they had railway facilities close to them.

37409. Mr. Atterd.—How much extra for poultry?—Twopence per head, three-pence a hundred for eggs, a halfpenny a pound on the butter, and the loss on the pork trade is 6s.

Examined by Mr. Seaton.

37410. It is manifestly for the public interest that there should be competition in transit by land and sea?—That is so.

37411. You hold that the railway companies, because of the privileges that they enjoy, and because of the special Parliamentary powers which they obtain, stand in a special relation to the public?—That is so.

37412. It is clear enough, I think, that a great railway company can at any time easily suppress competition by sea, especially in the case of a port like Droghda, or a small coasting service, by a temporary reduction of its rates?—Quite so.

37413. The existence of the steamer and the sea carriage is a benefit to the public?—Undoubtedly.

37414. The reduction of the railway rate, by reason of the existence of the steamer, is also a benefit to the public?—Yes.

37415. But you argue that when, by the action of the Steamship Company, that benefit to the public has been obtained from the railway, and when the railway, by the reduction of its rate, has suppressed the sea carriage, the railway should not then be at liberty summarily to withdraw the benefit to the public?—Quite so. It seems a most unreasonable thing that they should have power to bring their rates down for the purpose of killing a legitimate competition by water, where that competition is legitimate, and where it can be done cheaper than the land rate, and then to raise them again.

37416. Should you apply to the case this general legal principle—that a rate once voluntarily lowered should not be raised again?—For a considerable period, at any rate—say five or ten years.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. George de Bello Hall, Representative of the Droghda Development Association.

The witness has to the farmers of Swanlinbar district on account of the absence of railway facilities.

The spiritual industries of Down and Droghda districts also suffering greatly from the same cause.

The necessity for an effective check on railway companies to prevent the arbitrary raising of rates.

The case of the Great Northern Company at Droghda instead.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. George de Bolla Ball,
Representative of the
Drogheda
Development
Association.

The practice
of railway
companies in
raising rates
when competi-
tion has been
beaten off
regarded as
unjustifiable.

The serious
injury sus-
tained by
Drogheda by
the policy
of the Great
Northern
Railway
Company.

Preferential
rates given
to other
routes, and
through rates
see Drogheda
refused, etc.

The injury to
a district not
to be measured
solely by the
loss in a single
industry.

Equal invest-
ment of all
ports and
districts
called for in
the public
interest.

37387. Should not be raised again at all without satisfying the public authority, even after the lapse of a specified period?—Not in any case until after the lapse of a certain specified period, and then after satisfying some authority.

37388. I understand you consider that a railway company, by the mere expedient of a temporary reduction, can suppress a weak opponent, and by that means can deprive the public of the advantage which they had by reason of its existence?—Quite easily.

37389. You think that is unjustifiable?—Quite unjustifiable.

37390. And should not be permitted?—Certainly not.

37391. Especially as the railway companies hold a special position by reason of their Parliamentary powers?—Quite so.

37392. Now, in reference to Drogheda, I understand from you that before railways were constructed in Ireland, Drogheda was the natural point of import and export for about five Irish counties?—That is so.

37393. And also was the actual point?—That is so.

37394. It had a flourishing trade then?—It had.

37395. The effect of the introduction of railways has been, as stated in your evidence, that by various expedients, and, I may call them, perhaps, devices, the trade of your port has been reduced?—That is quite correct.

37396. Can we sum them up briefly. Preferential rates have been given by other routes?—Yes.

37397. Drogheda has been reduced through rates?—Yes.

37398. They have refused to take goods from Drogheda for carriage to the interior?—They have refused to collect or pay charges on traffic going there.

37399. I gather that they have even embarrassed the despatch of goods inland?—They have embarrassed the despatch of goods inland, but they have not refused to take them.

37400. They have left the port of Drogheda in relation to railway accommodation in an unimproved condition?—Quite so.

37401. Subjecting you to a disadvantage of 1s. 6d. a ton in regard to coal especially?—In regard to coal.

37402. Then they have so graded the rates from other ports inland as to leave you at a disadvantage of from eightpence to a shilling a ton, when this special disability of yours is taken into account?—Quite so; more than a shilling in all cases; it might add 1s. 6d. a ton.

37403. Is that prohibitive?—Quite prohibitive. The return given you of the imports of coal from nearly 60,000 to 37,000 will show you how it is gradually decreasing.

37404. When private and public ownership of railways are contrasted in discussion it is sometimes said that the State would have no interest in developing any port, if it owned the railways. What do you say to the private ownership of railways, which almost makes it inevitable that a great railway should, by reason of long mileage, usually favour one port to the exclusion or damage of all others?—It is most inequitable that it should be possible to do it; but people do not seem to take into consideration all the subsidiary interests that are affected. It is far more than the rate to the actual merchant that is complained of in these cases. It injures employment in the district; it injures the prosperity of the district, it injures practically all the interests besides the actual interest of the man paying the particular rate.

37405. All the people, not merely the traders of that port, but the taxpayers and citizens, should have equal rights to live, and be helped to live?—That is so; and to live in their own district, and not have to migrate.

37406. Is it compatible with the public interest that a great railway should be permitted to nurse and stultify the traffic of one particular port, and to damage and prejudice others?—It is not.

37407. Then as between a system which does that by the natural operation, as it were, of commercial motives on the part of the railway company and a system which regards no port with particular favour, or subjects no port to particular disfavour, what do you say of the public interest as between the two?—An authority which could be calculated upon to be impartial—a public authority—would be a great ad-

vantage; the difficulty as, perhaps, to decide what that authority should be, how it should be composed.

37408. Without going into the elements of its composition at present, simply contrasting the principle, do you say that an impartial authority, having no temptation to favour one place, and no inducement to disparage another place, would be better for all than an authority actuated by interest to any particular place?—Undoubtedly.

37409. Now, about your railway project, the scheme proposes to construct a railway across the country from the east coast to the west, from Drogheda, running north-west to Mullaghmore?—Quite so.

37410. And to purchase and take up the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway?—That is so.

37411. You have given the Commission a brief view of the important results that would be secured by this line to the residents of that very poor and undeveloped part of the country. I understand the capital required is about three-quarters of a million?—It would take about three quarters of a million.

37412. You would place the government of the line in the hands of a new local authority, composed of the representatives of three County Councils and of your port?—Of the Corporation of Drogheda—yes.

37413. Then, financially, the scheme would be contingent upon, firstly, the willingness of the Treasury to lend you the capital upon a sinking fund arrangement for repayment in sixty years?—Quite so.

37414. And secondly, upon the practicability of forming a company which would be willing to secure a minimum receipt of 68 a mile per week for the railway and pay you thirty per cent. on that?—Thirty per cent. on the receipts, as against 28 per mile a week.

37415. A Company that would be willing to incorporate itself upon the assumption that the minimum would be 68 per mile a week?—That, of course, could only be done with the development of the mineral traffic of the district.

37416. I mean that, in order to go on at all without subjecting the area to the risk of a heavy rate, you would have to get a company that would be willing to accept the responsibility of an agreement to pay 30 per cent. upon an assumed maximum of 68 per mile a week?—That is so.

37417. You think that assumed minimum fair, and well within the limits of probability by reason of its being the average between the present receipts of the Sligo and Leitrim and the Cavan and Leitrim?—That is so.

37418. Just one other point. I gather from your abstract that you are strongly impressed with the view that the railway question is only a limited part of the Irish question?—I am afraid that all questions in Ireland are only small parts of a great whole.

37419. We are all sensible of the width of the Irish question, and the variety of issues embraced in it, but the reference to this Commission relates to the railways, and the question put to them is, how the railways could be best employed for the development of the country?—That is so.

37420. If it were possible to satisfy financial conditions in such a way that vested administration of existing railways would provide a surplus sufficient to work the subsidiary lines, to provide additional lines, and to make reductions in the rates and fares, do not you think that, so far as the railways are concerned, that would be the most beneficial thing that could happen to the country?—If it could be done, and all these advantages could undoubtedly be proved to follow, such a control as you suggest would be admirable.

37421. For instance, if the application of public credit, borrowing money at 3 per cent., or so, left a surplus of the present net profits, and if vested management left a surplus also of working expenses, would not that be a more possible way of reducing rates and providing additional lines than isolated districts soliciting the Treasury for grants?—What we hear in Drogheda—of course I am speaking for the Development Association, and how we have discussed it there—is that it has always been a mistake for Irishmen to fall in with the policy of England to keep Ireland simply as a fairway, and that we should have to develop the industries

by developing the commercial spirit in the country, and that it should run side by side with any change of control over the railway companies. If a body could be formed that could carry out those two objects together, we think it would go a great way towards relieving a great many of the present difficulties.

37425. The development of a commercial spirit is a matter of generations, even under favourable conditions, but the needs of Ireland are urgent; because you desire to develop the commercial spirit in Ireland, necessarily a slow process, would you postpone the benefit that might be derived from such a use of the railways as would not only develop the agricultural output of Ireland, but also stimulate the markets for home products in Ireland?—What we rather feared was this—If an authority is formed now, we do not see the exact material to exercise such a control over it as we would like to see. We have one body of men in Ireland at the present time—these are the County Councils, the County Councils, I believe, are very efficiently conducted on the whole, but after all, they represent solely the agricultural interest, they do not represent the commercial interest.

37426. Apart from the County Councils altogether, is it not possible, would it be even difficult, to construct in Ireland a body of men for the administration of the railways which would be representatives of the public, and upon which you could depend to apply the profits of the system in the reduction of rates and fares and generally for the public benefit, instead of subjecting Irishmen to what I think you must feel to be the humbug and futility of coming over here day after day to the Treasury to ask for individual grants for individual enterprises?—Undoubtedly. I have simply to put forward that one point, and we think that any body formed should be thoroughly representative not only of the agricultural, but of the commercial interests. With a body like that we would feel quite assured that the interests of the traffic of the country would be well looked after.

Examined by Mr. ACONGERS.

37427. Just a word about the new railway. It would terminate in Drogheda instead of Belfast, but it would to a considerable extent run through much the same country that is proposed by the Blackrod Bay scheme which you actually cross with the line out in Sligo?—A line running at right angles to another surely does not affect it. It might cross it.

37428. It would be a line from the West to take traffic to and from England?—Quite so; England and Scotland.

37429. And the Blackrod scheme proposes to do that from Belfast?—The Blackrod scheme is in the air very much.

37430. It has got a Bill?—It has.

37431. It is said to have very powerful capitalists behind it?—I know some very clever people who will not have anything to say to it.

37432. Your scheme would not have any hope of getting as the Blackrod scheme has, through ocean traffic?—No; we hope to get solid inland traffic.

37433. It would have to depend on the local resources of this district?—That is the object of it, to develop the local resources of the district.

37434. The other scheme has a sanguine hope of ocean traffic behind it?—It may have hopes.

37435. Do you think it is quite likely that that object would be met?—I speak of a line that would pass through an area of country which has recently been almost in its entirety—except at County Louth and County Meath—the subject of enquiry by the Congested Districts Commission. They have sat and enquired how they could assist the unfortunate people who are nearly starving. I have gone through that district personally, and it is almost painful to see the condition of things and see the people living as they are. The object of the Commission is to see how to develop so that the condition of the people could be improved. We say it is known to contain large mineral resources, and in no way could the Government assist those people better

than by giving them railway facilities from that district to enable those mineral resources to be developed, and enable employment to be given there, and to reduce the heavy cartage rates that exist at the present time.

37436. You would strike through Cavan or somewhere there?—That is just roughly the scheme—that blue line (handing in a plan).

37437. I see. Suppose we take Killesno, which is close enough to it, as, roughly speaking, I am not far wrong when I said Cavan—you go pretty close to Cavan everywhere, so that you can already get to the seaboard—not to Drogheda, so conveniently, I admit, but to the seaboard?—From what point.

37438. Supposing the new line for the sale of the congested districts were made across as far as Cavan, then it has an outlet as far as Dublin or Belfast?—A very long roundabout way. You have a direct line between Cavan and Mullingar which is not really provided properly with facilities. Ballyboonee is a place some distance from a railway, but there is a very large woollen manufactory there.

37439. You think the whole district wants development?—Undoubtedly, and there is supposed to be a large demand at Ballyboonee, too, and at Killesno and Killesno.

37440. Do you remember twenty years ago or more, when the North-Western went to Greenore?—Yes.

37441. They thought they were going to develop a very big trade?—Possibly.

37442. It has not been a very great success by all accounts; their accounts show they are losing money on their Irish lines, the Newry and Dundalk?—They have been carrying goods for practically nothing in order to prevent the Steamship Company from getting them.

37443. It has never been a very profitable undertaking?—They are losing money on the Dundalk steamer. There is no reason, I presume, why they should not lose on them.

37444. They are losing money on that?—Railway companies are willing to lose money for years in order to kill a competitor.

37445. That may be, for all that their trade to Greenore has not been very much developed?—That may be.

37446. Do you not think that is because of the natural advantages of Belfast and Dublin?—That may be.

37447. I am not blaming Drogheda in the least, but you have to face the fact that it is an inferior harbour, of course, for steamers?—So was Dublin. A few years ago, in 1874, you could walk across the Liffey, where the North-Western boats lie now, at low water.

37448. Who spent the money upon that?—The Port of Dublin. The railway companies bought their railway facilities down alongside at their own expense; they did not ask the people for any money to do that; if they had, Dublin could not have developed.

37449. They did that after the Dublin people had made their port available at most stages of the tide?—No, the railway was there before the port was developed.

37450. Your view is that the railway companies ought to come down to the quays?—If they come down to the quays, the Drogheda people would be quite willing to assist them in developing the port.

37451. Have you ever made a suggestion of that kind and asked them to come into a joint scheme?—I have not, but it has been done previously.

37452. Have you pledged yourselves to an expenditure of money to improve the harbour?—I do not believe the point was raised in that way.

37453. I want to ask you about another thing—the Lancashire and Yorkshire service. I gather that the Drogheda people wanted them to go there, did they not?—My own impression, if I may give a personal view, as I have not consulted our Association on this point, is that the sale to the Lancashire and Yorkshire was an engineered thing. They may have been asked, or they may have got somebody to ask them.

37454. I do not doubt that, but, as a matter of fact, Drogheda wanted them to come?—No, Drogheda did not want them to come until they volunteered to come; then, with the representations that were put forward as to the gains they were going to get, the Drogheda people thought they were going to be made a second Liverpool.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. George de Bello Tall, Representative of the Drogheda Development Association.

The prospects of traffic in the route of the proposed railway from Drogheda to Mullingar.

The development of traffic in the Greenore route by the London and North-Western Company.

The Drogheda harbour authorities prepared to improve the accommodation at traffic developments.

Consulting with the railway required.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's acquisition of the Drogheda Steamship Company.

Provision of a better service of steamers not fulfilled.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. George de
Beile Bell,
Representative
of the
Drogheda
Development
Association.

The acquisition
of the
Drogheda
Steam Packet
Company by the
Lancashire and
Yorkshire
Railway
Company,
supported by
Drogheda in
the expectation
of an
increased
steamer
service.

The introduction
of Eng-
lish Railway
Companies to
Ireland
objected to.

Expansion
of the business
in traffic
through
Drogheda.

Pigs previously
exported
were turned
into bacon
at Navan.

37482. When the Bill was brought before Parliament, the Drogheda people supported it generally?—Certainly; anybody would have done so after reading Mr. Aspinall's evidence. The whole thing was based on Mr. Aspinall's evidence.

37483. I will not go into that, Mr. Aspinall's evidence was "We hope to give a good service, and to get a good trade"—Mr. Aspinall's evidence was very clear and distinctive, that we had not got such a service at present as we ought to have, but if their Company came, they could give it.

37484. There was not any pledge of six days a week or anything of that kind certain?—There was no definite pledge, but there was a clear intention.

37485. An expectation that they would do something?—Not an expectation, but what they would do if they had got the power.

37486. Just tell me what passage you are referring to? If you take it, to begin with, Mr. Balfour Browne was examining. The question was: "I believe what is strongly desired is an efficient and expeditious service so as to retain their traffic." Reply: "Yes." (Q.) "Can such a service in your view be carried on by a Company with small capital and such revenue as the Drogheda Company?" (A.) "I believe not." I gather that you agree with that, that they had not money to provide new steamers?—I do not agree with that. I believe the Company would have gone on very well if certain action had not been taken to induce them to sell, and they thought from these representations and others that were made privately that it was a splendid thing for the town that was going to be developed to let a powerful Company like the Lancashire and Yorkshire into it, but, personally, I think it a great mistake to let any English company in.

37487. I am not in the least disputing that; but Lord Purdie said they had £11,000 in reserve, and they had only been paying a 2 per cent. dividend or something of that kind?—That is so; they were facing competition at that time; that does not indicate that they could not improve.

37488. A company in that position could not have afforded to buy steamers such as the Lancashire and Yorkshire did, they put two on, and they lost?—Not at that time, one steamer was put on.

37489. They put on two to start with?—They might have built two nominally for the Drogheda trade, but they took care to take one away at an early date.

37490. But they started with two. You will agree with that so far?—One of those was for the east coast of England trade.

37491. It was taken off soon afterwards, but it was tried for Drogheda?—I do not believe it was ever built for Drogheda; it was for the east coast trade. When before Parliament they took powers to put on two boats, and they had to make an appearance.

37492. You agree that it was sent there?—It was taken away in a few months.

37493. Has not the trend of the traffic changed a great deal? Is not a large proportion of the stuff going to Scotland?—Store cattle and sheep.

37494. And pigs?—No pigs come through Drogheda at all; they all go by Dublin.

37495. A larger proportion of the traffic from your district is going to Scotland than used to?—I believe so.

37496. You know, of course, that the Lancashire and Yorkshire have not power to run to Scotland?—I do.

37497. Therefore, if there is no other company, and the Drogheda traffic is going to Scotland, it cannot go by the Lancashire and Yorkshire steamers. That is not their fault?—Not at all.

37498. I can tell another thing. Curiously enough, there is a bacon factory at Navan?—There is.

37499. And the pigs that used to come alive are now turned into bacon and eaten in the neighbourhood of Navan?—Yes.

37500. That is an Irish industry?—They are practically local pigs.

37501. That is a disadvantage to Drogheda as a shipping port?—Yes, there are dealers who always used to ship from Drogheda to the English markets, who are now sending their pigs to England—not sending them to the bacon factory—but sending them to England, via Dublin.

37472. I can quite fancy that, but it is a fact that a good many of the pigs that used to go alive are now being manufactured into bacon in Ireland?—Certainly.

37473. That is just what we all want to see for Ireland, a development of local industry?—Certainly.

37474. Unfortunately, so far, Drogheda suffers?—Yes.

37475. That is a disadvantage?—I have not alluded to the pig traffic at all. I know that there were certain reasons for it.

37476. I just wanted to see that my information was correct. Now I will go to another point. Navan resented me. You thought it was unreasonable to give cheap tickets to Dublin unless you gave cheap tickets in the same degree to Drogheda?—That is so.

37477. Take that a little further; I suppose there are shopkeepers in Navan?—There are.

37478. Suppose you gave cheap tickets on five or six days a week to Drogheda, what would the Navan shopkeepers say?—I would give them both ways.

37479. Would it not be simpler to make all your fares 50 per cent. down at once?—Much simpler. Why do not the Great Northern today do that? If they did that there would be no complaint.

37480. Is not the answer that they do not think they could afford it?—No; the answer is that they make more by bringing people up from Drogheda than they would make on taking the goods down, and they do not want the port developed, because it would create a competition in their route and prevent them getting the long mileage from Dublin and Belfast.

37481. Surely if they get the same rate for a ton of goods from Dublin to Drogheda as from Drogheda to Dublin it does not matter to them which way the traffic flows?—They prefer to bring the people up. There are more people who go to Dublin to purchase a box of goods, and they make more money out of bringing them than they would on the transit of a ton of goods to Drogheda.

37482. You agree that they are not doing it to spite Drogheda?—We believe they are doing it distinctly to prevent the development of the port of Drogheda.

37483. That is not their object?—It is their business to make money, and they hit on the scheme that gives them the most money. They are quite regardless of the interests of the shopkeepers of Drogheda or anything else.

37484. You do not mean that they have got any particular reason to want to hinder Drogheda?—They want to take their own way—what suits them. That is your view?—I say they want to hinder the development of the port of Drogheda, because it would affect a competition against them if it were developed, which they do not want. It would give them a shorter mileage.

37485. It is their interest to develop Dublin and Belfast rather than Drogheda?—Yes.

37486. That is your view?—Yes.

37487. Now, about these rates—your Development Association are evidently public-spirited and prepared to spend money. Do you know that you can raise the question of putting up rates at present quite inexpensively?—No, we do not; I am not aware of that.

37488. Are you aware that a railway company cannot raise a rate that has once been fixed?—They say it is not in their book; they have not altered it in their rate-book.

37489. It has been charged?—It has been charged, but they very seldom put a rate down unless for two or three people who insist on having the rate.

37490. It has been charged, and you have good evidence that it has been charged?—That is so.

37491. If they raise that rate, and any trader challenges it, they have to send the Railway Commission that they have a reasonable ground for raising it?—Then it goes into law; you would have to employ counsel, solicitors, and all the rest of it.

37492. I assure you it would be a great deal cheaper than running a special steamer to Glasgow. You get your solicitors to look into the matter?—If I may take it from you as a Commissioner that the fact that they gave a 4s. rate for four is the publication of a reduced rate, then I think we shall be able to deal with the matter.

37483. You must not take it from me that it is so, but I suggest that you should ask competent legal advice as to whether it is not so?—That is rather hedging.

37484. I must not, of course, give you advice against a company clearly, even if I were quite certain, but I suggest that you should consider whether you have not a legal remedy at present?—You ask whether we are not public-spirited enough to deal with it; I say yes, if we had it on authority. You are hedging now as an authority, and saying you are not quite clear what our rights are.

37485. Do not say that. I say if I was quite clear I should not tell you so, because I do not think it right to give legal advice across the table here. If you were to ask that, I think you would find that it is not as expensive as you imagine. There is no reason why it should be a very expensive process?—The general opinion is that it is useless to throw money away in making any claim against a railway company.

37486. Have you any grounds for that opinion?—Any cases that have been dealt with have always been very troublesome.

37487. I assure you there are plenty the other way.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Fox.

37488. With reference to this railway which you propose to construct, I see you have put the possible rate on the whole area which you propose to charge at about 4d in the pound?—And that works out roughly at £13,600 a year?—That is so.

37489. You are aware that in nearly every case where these railways have been constructed, very many estimates have been formed as to the rates which would be entailed on the district?—Yes.

37490. Sometimes it has been said that it will cost 2s., 4d., or 6d., and in nearly every case, instead of those estimates being realized the rate has gone up to something like 5d., 8d., 1s., and even up to 2s. 1s.—Yes.

37491. In other words, the estimates have been derided and trodden?—You are dealing now with ordinary speculative promoters' schemes. We are not suggesting that there is to be any speculation in this. It is a matter to be dealt with by the committee of these figures and calculations can be substantiated.

37492. That argument applied to the railways constructed in the early stages of the Act, but later there was not the same promotion. At first there was a great deal of speculation, and no doubt they were very improperly financed, but I am talking of the railways constructed under the different Acts, some 22 in number. Those estimates have been always exceeded, and have entailed a very heavy rate upon the districts. What reason have you to think that when you estimate this rate it may not, unfortunately, also be doubled—that the 4d. might be 8d., or even a shilling?—We have an illustration the cost of the construction of the other lines, and we have not that at a rate?—

37493. I do not want to go into the whole of that point, but I think the cost is practically £5,500 a mile?—£5,500 is the outside price.

37494. Some of the railways have cost £4,000 and others £9,000, but roughly speaking there is not a great deal of difference. My wish is to get the broad principle. Do you think that any County Council—County Council or County League—in the light of past experience, and seeing the heavy losses which these different railways have entailed upon their districts, would be willing to undertake such a big transaction as this, of raising a capital sum of something like £200,000—£300,000?—But it is spread over such a large area that it comes to such a small thing practically on each.

37495. In every county where a guarantee has been given the charge is a very onerous one. You know that County Leitrim refused a loan of £34,000 only the other day because they thought that it might entail some extra charge for working expenses?—We are not asking that anything should be done if the Counties of Leitrim and Carrig, and Drogheda refused to participate in it.

37496. My point is this: in the light of past experience do you think for one instant that these counties or any other county in Ireland would in the present day make themselves liable for the payment of such a

large sum—£13,000 at the lowest estimate—and probably £25,000 or £27,000 a year for that railway, irrespective of this particular rate. Do you think it likely? It is of no use discussing the point if you do not?—I do think it likely under the circumstances and conditions that we have put before you.

37497. The whole weight of the evidence with regard to a barometrical guaranteed railway is that no county would ever think of putting their hands into their pockets for one penny more?—No county owns a railway. In this case the County Council would own it themselves.

37498. With regard to the Lancashire and Yorkshire service, you referred to Mr. Aspinall's evidence. I have read it here, but I know nothing more about the service than I have read. Presumably that company was prepared to come in with plenty of money at their back and do their best. They did not do it from philanthropy, but thought there were great prospects of opening up a profitable traffic, not only in agricultural produce, but a large tourist traffic up the Burn, which, I believe, is a very beautiful district?—That is so.

37499. From the very first they were thinking of doing it as being a good thing for the country and a good thing for themselves. Manifestly the original company had not much money, and were not in a position to develop the tourist traffic and cross-Channel traffic, and the evidence given showed that unless something could be done at the hands of a powerful company the traffic, which was then declining, would still further decline. From the very first, the first year after the Lancashire and Yorkshire came in, the traffic fell off at once by some few hundred pounds, and, seeing that, they were obliged to reconsider their position, and instead of running four steamers, as they originally intended, they found it did not pay them, and they curtailed that service. I only want to be fair as far as one can, and get to the root of things?—You would hardly assume that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company went into such a speculation with their eyes closed. They calculated and estimated everything most carefully before they dealt with the matter at all.

37500. I should imagine so?—They went to Parliament and made certain representations in order to get an Act of Parliament granted. We say they did not carry out their undertaking to Parliament, and they clearly showed their knowledge of what would happen in the evidence of Mr. Aspinall.

37501. What they expected would happen?—The fact remains that they did not make any speculation about what was going to happen. They said that if it was in their hands these things would happen.

37502. Naturally in the interest of his company Mr. Aspinall was anxious to do what he could to develop the traffic?—But his point was that the sailings were not sufficient at the time, and that the uncertainty of the sailings would prevent the traffic being developed.

37503. For a year they kept it on?—Only the first year.

37504. And the result of that first year's trading was to show a loss on the previous year's trading?—Quite so.

37505. And they had to reconsider the position?—I know nothing about the loss on their trading; I only know about the reduced tonnage.

37506. I deny any such loss. I have some evidence from the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company subsequently, but on the face of it it seems incredible that any large company such as the Lancashire and Yorkshire, who had gone into this question, should have lightly abandoned it except under great pressure, and only because they found it was not paying its way and was still further declining?—If the agreement between the Lancashire and Yorkshire and the North-Western—

37507. I was coming to that point, but have you any solid grounds for thinking there is anything of this kind?—I cannot say that we have solid grounds, but it is in the report, and coincidental with the reduction of sailings and interest in the port of Drogheda we find the competition between the Lancashire and Yorkshire and the London and North-Western in the Liverpool and Manchester district was reduced, which points very clearly to an agreement of some kind between them.

37508. Your view, for what it is worth, of course, is that the North-Western Company have undermined the Lancashire and Yorkshire for any loss of

Nov. 16, 1907.

Mr. George de Bolla Bell, Representative of the Drogheda Development Association.

The proposed line from Drogheda to Mullaghmore. The committee concerned likely to object to any further railway tax.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company alleged to have failed to carry out their undertakings as to developing traffic through Drogheda.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's working.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's working.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's working.

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The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's working.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company's working.

Nov 14, 1867.

Mr George de
Belle Hall,
Representative
of the
Drogheda
Development
Association

Suggestion
that railway
rates reduced
to kill com-
petition should
be continued

The period
for which the
coasting
steamer
service was
continued

traffic which they may have sustained by virtue of their reduced cross-Channel service?—The common idea is that there is some pooling arrangement between them. Drogheda was made a pawn in a game of chess between them.

33520. At any rate, your particular point is that Drogheda suffers a grievance as far as its development is concerned from the action of these railway companies?—That is so.

33521. I noticed that in reply to my friend Mr. Sexton with regard to rates, you said that where a rate has been reduced and brought below the rate actually charged when there was sea competition, which sea competition was in the interests of the traders—such a rate having been introduced in order to kill that competition—you considered that sufficient ground for the law insisting that that reduced rate which had the effect of killing the competition, should be continued?—Undoubtedly.

33522. Would you also go further and say that when that reduced rate was given by the railway company presumably it was a paying rate to them. They may not have made so much profit as when the old rate was in force, but presumably they were making something out of it. Would you say that they were carrying that traffic for nothing?—You never can tell. Take, for instance, oats. They carried oats in competition with the coasting service to Dublin at 4s 6d; the old rate was 3s. I do not suppose it would pay them to carry 150 or 160 miles for 4s 6d.

33523. I think they actually lost while that rate was in force, carrying the traffic at an unremunerative rate in the hope that they would drive off the other. My point is, that if the rate paid them for a couple of years—the old coasting service was in operation for two years?—Two years? Three or four years, was it not?

33524. I am speaking of the parricous service?—They only ran between Dublin and Derry and Dundalk.

Mr MICHAEL McNEILL, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Michael
McNeill, J.P.,
Representative
of the
Ards
Railway
Committee.

Constitution
and object
of the Ards
Railway
Committee.

Number of
villages in the
Glenties
Union.

Average
valuation for
each house-
holder.

A line of rail-
way between
Glenties and
Ards,
suggested by
developing local
industries.

Average
yearly value
of the fishing
industry, and
the heavy
cost of carting
the fish to
the railways.

33525. You appear on behalf of the Ards Railways Committee?—Yes.

33526. What is that committee?—It is the clergyman of the district of all denominations, and justices of the peace of the district. It was established about two years ago for the purpose of trying to procure a line of railway between Glenties and Ards to develop that district.

33527. Just to get in the notes some idea of the congested state of the union where this railway is projected, just give us the number of ratings in the union?—The number of ratings is 10,150.

33528. What is the valuation?—The entire valuation is £22,311.

33529. That makes an average of what?—The average valuation for each householder is £2 4s., and the number of ratings under £4 valuation in the union is 9,225, or 75 per cent. of the whole. From this it is evident how desirable it is in order that the inhabitants of this most congested district should live in any sort of comfort that the material resources of the district should be fully developed. For the purpose of this development there is no gauyaying the fact that the railway extension, is a most important factor.

33530. What are the principal industries in the district?—Fishing is one of our principal industries.

33531. Can you give us any particulars about the fishing industry?—I can from the extracts of the reports of the Congested Districts Board. The number of fish taken by the local fishermen, taking the whole four years from the 31st of March, 1863, to 31st March, 1866, you find that the average earnings of fishermen, for fish caught in the district, comes to about £1,200 each year. Then the cost of marketing those fish, carting them to the markets from the different stations where they were landed to the nearest railway station comes to about £750 a year.

33532. Mr. Appling?—What is the distance that they have to be carted?—It varies from nine to twelve miles.

33525. My point was that where a rate presumably did pay the railway company, and where it had been put in force for certain specific purposes against the interest of traders, that would be a further argument that the rate should be continued?—Yes.

33526. One other question. I gather you would wish to see the railways put under some popular control, if such a control could be satisfactorily established. Would your idea be that if such a system could be brought in, what the unified system would have to look to, would be, not a particular sea competition or rival railway competition or the particular nature or extent of the traffic to be carried, or even its value so much as what rate would pay for the cost of conveyance plus a moderate sum to cover the interest on cost of construction. That would be your idea?—That would be my idea.

33527. Private railway companies, organized as they are at present, naturally in the interest of their shareholders, have to look to all those factors, sea competition, railway competition, the nature of the commodity carried, the value, and so on. Those considerations would not operate to anything like the same extent if put under some such system as that put forward by Mr. Sexton. Is that your view?—That is so. As a matter of fact, the returns for 1865 would show that if the earnings were distributed, taking preference guaranteed shares, debentures, loan stock, with all their various interests paid, there would still be a balance equal to almost 3 per cent. on the ordinary capital of all the railways in Ireland, so that, if all the systems were united even now, there would naturally be no loss. There is 3 per cent. on the ordinary capital after paying all and relieving the ratepayers on the guaranteed lines as well. The figures for 1865, I think, will show that.

33528. Might I just inform you of one thing about that charge complained of in the rates for herrings to Glasgow and Galloway which Mr. Gees mentioned yesterday. I have just received a telegram from Dublin saying there is a low rate in operation; they are receiving a rate of 3s. 9d. per cwt.

33526. Chairman.—Where are the fish landed?—Some are landed at Port Nee, some at Rosbeg, and some at Loches Point.

33527. Just take the fish landed at Rosbeg—I suppose that all has to be carted to Glenties?—Yes.

33528. How far is that?—Twelve Irish miles.

33529. The earnings of the fishermen for the period that you have mentioned—have you any estimate of that?—It varies slightly for different years, but, taking it on the general average for the four years, it comes to about £1,200.

33530. Has your association, your committee, been in communication with any of the public authorities in Dublin upon it?—Yes.

33531. What is the latest communication you have had with them?—The latest communication we had from the Castle was on the 14th January of this year, 1867, with reference to it. I may mention that the matter was put before the late Chief Secretary, Mr. Bryce. The case for railway extension for the locality was made out very strongly by the deputation that waited on Mr. Bryce on the occasion of his visit to Ards last summer—that was the summer of 1866. The Chief Secretary then expressed his thorough approval of the project, and promised to do all in his power to support it, but subsequently we memorialized the Lord Lieutenant in the matter, and a reply was sent to the Secretary of the County Council, and the Glenties District Council, which, while practically admitting the utility of the project, stated that they wished to know what contribution would be made locally before a Government grant could be sanctioned; and the railway companies, the District Council of Glenties, and the County Council, replied to this enquiry of the Lord Lieutenant to the effect that, owing to the poverty of the district, and the burden of taxation borne by the ratepayers, the rates amounting to 5s. in the £ on houses, and 5s. in the £ on land, no local contribution could be made. The reply of the District Council pointed out, moreover,

that a Tory Government had already constructed three important railways in County Donegal, Glenties at a cost of £110,000, Killybegs at a cost of £115,000, and Bartleport at a cost of £235,000.

37542 A total capital grant of half a million?—Half a million.

37543 You can stop there?—The reply went on to say that it seemed strange that a Government professing great friendship for Ireland should balk at the comparatively paltry sum required for this extension.

37544 What was the amount?—£25,000 to £30,000. Mr. Sweeney will give evidence on that point—the cost of construction.

37545 Is there anything else besides the fishing industry to which you have referred?—There is the hawseman industry, and the cattle and sheep raised in the district, and there is croquet and shroed.

37546 Mr. Sweeney.—Is there any building stone?—Yes, granite; and there is the great industry. The development of the tourist traffic is a considerable item.

37547 Chairman.—Now, what have you to suggest to this Commission in reference to it? What is your suggestion?—The suggestion is that some—

37548 First of all, I suppose the case for the railway is as strong today as it was when you first raised it with Mr. Bryer?—Yes, but there is this much, that we consider that when two wealthy companies like the Great Northern of Ireland and the Midland Railway have acquired the two State-made railways, which were constructed at a cost of £235,000, for a sum of £5,000, they should take some steps to spend a small sum of about £25,000 in developing the resources of the district through which their railway passes, and they were approached on the subject themselves after we got the reply from Mr. Keadell on the 14th January, 1907. We had made arrangements with the Joint Committee of the Great Northern of Ireland and the Midland of England to meet a deputation of merchants of our own place with a view to putting the matter strongly before them. The Joint Committee were at Glenties, and had averaged previously, but through some misunderstanding on the part of the Secretary of the Committee no deputation could be appointed.

37549 And you have not met them yet?—I personally met three myself; but I was not deputed—it was only a mere accident. On July 23rd I received a letter from Mr. Lawson, the Secretary of the Joint Committee, pointing out that "The Joint Committee propose inspecting this line on Friday and Saturday next, and expected to be at Glenties about 10.30 a.m. on Friday. It would be well, therefore, in case the Committee should wish to receive a deputation on the question of the extension of the line from Glenties to Ardara for you to arrange for a small deputation to be present if you think it advisable." The Committee came, and we could not arrange. I pointed out the facts afterwards to Mr. Pless, the Manager of the Great Northern Railway, and received this reply on the 31st July:—"I am in receipt of your letter of the 29th inst., and am sorry that the communication from Mr. Lawson should have been so indefinite. The Joint Committee had distinctly determined that they would receive the deputation, and of this you should have been made acquainted. However, I am quite sure that your explanation to the Committee has put them in possession of the whole facts of the case, and the subject will be considered at the next meeting of the Committee." On September 19th, 1907, we received the following reply from the Secretary of the Joint Committee, Mr. Lawson:—"Dear Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 29th July to Mr. Pless, which has been sent to me, I beg to inform you that the question of extending the railway from Glenties to Ardara was considered by my Committee on 5th inst., and I am instructed to say that while the Committee are desirous at all times of affording facilities for traffic and to meet the wishes of the public as far as possible, they regret they do not feel justified in making any extension of the line from Glenties at present—Yours truly, W. R. Lawson."

37550 That does not shut the door actually?—No, but it is tantamount to it.

37551 I suppose there is no question that a line

of that kind as that poor district would do an immense amount of good?—Oh, yes, unquestionably it would be very useful, and I find from the returns of the Midland Railway Company—

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINGS P.O.

37552 In the last instance that line seems to have stopped at a very small place in the middle of the district when it might have been continued down to the sea coast to the point that is now suggested at Ardara?—Yes.

37553 I think it has always been recognised that if the line were built over again the Government would probably make Ardara the terminus?—Yes, that is so.

37554 That is the view Mr. Bryer took?—Yes. I may mention that there was one mistake made at the time of the construction of this line, that is to say, the Killybegs was the line proposed first. The people residing in the district of Ardara only consented to a barebones guarantee on the understanding that the line would eventually be extended to Ardara. That is through Killybegs, there was no other line nearer at the time. Soon after that Mr. Balfour granted the line to Glenties—he got the line constructed to Glenties—with the result that the people living in and around the district of Ardara had to pay tolls for the maintenance and support of the Killybegs line, while at the same time they were getting their traffic over the Glenties line, which was met by rail and a shorter distance by cart to Ardara. The result was that we were at the same time paying money into the pocket of the Board of Works and the old Donegal Company—about £250 annually to each. The surplus profits normally derived from the Glenties line went into the pockets of the Board of Works and the old Donegal Company, while at the same time the ratepayers of the barony of Banagh were paying out of the rates about sixpence in the pound towards the maintenance and support of the Killybegs line in consequence of having lost the Ardara traffic.

37555 Is there any fish traffic at Ardara to any considerable extent?—Yes.

37556 That is now carried, I suppose, either to Glenties or to Killybegs?—Yes.

37557 At any rate, there is a considerable fish traffic which at present has to be carried by cart a distance of six or seven miles, and I fancy the road there is rather awful?—Yes. Six would be the shortest number of miles.

37558 I think, if I remember right, that at the time Mr. Bryer moved that deputation the reason why he advocated the railway was that he considered the roads not suitable for motor traffic, and in his opinion the only means of getting communication was by means of a railway. I gather from your proof that the joint companies—the Midland and Great Northern—who have taken over the whole of that system, have not absolutely shut the door; they have consented to meet a deputation of the traders of the district to consider the question again; was not that the bearing of their letter?—That was the bearing of the last letter.

37559 It was subsequent to the deputation that that letter was written?—No, the letter was written before the railway company saw the deputation.

37560 Then practically we may take it as closed?—Yes.

37561 I suppose your contention is that if such a large grant of money, practically a quarter of a million, was given by the Government and supported by a contribution of only £10,000 from each of the two railways—£25,000 altogether.

37562 At any rate, it was comparatively a small sum, and the Donegal Railway Company (now the Midland Great Northern) having acquired at the expense of the Government this large line—presumably a profitable one—you think that they might be a little more public-spirited in doing something towards making this desirable connection?—Their Executives are prepared to construct the line provided there is a local contribution.

37563 Provided they get a local contribution they would bring the matter before the Treasury; so that probably if the railway company met you halfway, or even to the extent of a fourth of the cost, the Government would do the rest?—Possibly if the Joint Committee give £5,000 the Government will give the balance.

Nov. 14, 1907.

Mr. Michael McNeill, M.P., Representative of the Ardara Railway Commission.

Ardara is a mere inland station for the railway from Stranorlar, thus Glenties.

The ratepayers of Ardara district paying tax for the Killybegs line while obliged to use the Glenties line.

The fish traffic carried by the shores of railway communication to Ardara.

Suggests that the joint committee working the Donegal Railway should contribute to the construction of the Ardara extension.

Government would probably grant the balance of the cost.

Examined by Mr. SEARLES.

Nov. 14, 1897.

Mr. Michael
McNelis, J.P.,
Representative of the
Ards
Railway
Committee.

The distance
which the fish
from Ardara
district have
to be carried.

37564. Have you said what the length of the line would be?—About six miles.

37565. What is the usual distance that the fish is carried?—It varies from 11 to 12 miles.

37566. You have given one case here of 20 miles?

—That is for salmon only.

37567. Salmon are carried as much as 20?—The herrings and all the other heavy fish is carried 11 or 12 miles.

37568. To the great reduction of their market value?—Yes.

37569. What would be the greatest distance of cartage if you got this railway?—About three to four miles.

37570. Even in the case of the salmon?—The salmon; I am not talking about the salmon; you would still have about 14 miles for the salmon.

37571. But for all other fish it would be a distance so slight that it would make no material difference?—Yes.

37572. Have the Irish Government given you to understand what part of the £20,000 they want to be provided otherwise than from the Exchequer?—No. They say that if the local contribution is given they will consider the matter.

37573. How much do you suppose they would want?—I think about £5,000.

37574. Those two lines, Killybegs and Glenties, were they built at a cost of a quarter of a million and given over practically as a free gift to the powerful combination of the Great Northern of Ireland and Midland of England?—Yes.

37575. Could you say, apart from any question of balance between receipts and expenses on those two

lines, whether they have proved valuable leaders to the main line?—Certainly.

37576. Would it be correct to say that the Northern and Midland combination thereby acquired a valuable revenue from traffic fed on from them to the main line?—Certainly.

37577. And you consider that such a contribution as £5,000 from these companies would be only a small percentage of the advantage they have got from that State gift?—That is all.

Examined by Mr. ARDRECH.

37578. I do want to understand the geography. You say from Glenties to Ardara is six miles?—Somewhere about that.

37579. You say the fish is carried at present twelve miles, and suppose you bring the railway six miles nearer, as far as my arithmetic goes, that will leave six miles to cart, would it not?—But the fish will be landed at different places to where they are at present; practically new harbour accommodation has been provided.

37580. I see. You would land them at a different place, which would only be three or four miles from the railway?—The Congested Districts Board are making a new harbour.

37581. Is no fish landed at Gwecharat?—No.

37582. It is not a likely place to land fish?—No.

37583. So that if you got your railway down to Ardara, it would be the only place in the district where a railway is wanted for the fish traffic?—Yes.

Mr. J. H. H. SWINEN, M. INST. C.E., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

37584. You are a civil engineer?—I am.

37585. And you have made an estimate of the cost of the proposed railway to Ardara?—I have.

37586. Have you carefully considered what the cost would be about?—I have—yes.

37587. What is your estimate?—That I do not remember.

37588. The total—£23,587 for the five miles five furlongs.

37589. And it is under six miles?—Yes.

37590. And you think that for that amount of money a railway could be constructed in this district?—I think so; probably less than that.

37591. Have you heard the evidence of the previous witness, Mr. McNelis?—Unfortunately I have not. I have only just come into the room.

37592. Very well. We have heard all the particulars about the railway; we only wanted to ask you about the estimate. You are satisfied that £23,000 would build the railway?—I am quite satisfied that it would.

37593. Mr. Swinen—There are no physical features of difficulty—no sharp curves or steep gradients?—None. The only inclination of steepness at all is

just leaving Glenties Station, and that is not steeper than the line existing from Glenties.

37594. Mr. Swinen—I see you estimate the forty five acres of land required at £60 per acre?—Yes.

37595. Is any part of that land building land?—No, none of it.

37596. Does it seem reasonable that public money should be given if it is going to be spent in buying land of that kind at £60 an acre?—I think you would get it for very much less if the railway went, a considerable amount is proposed to be given free.

37597. Do you think that if public money builds a railway it is reasonable that the people who are going to get the benefit of the railway should also make a large profit on their land?—I do not suggest it, certainly.

37598. You have calculated it on the basis of making a large profit?—I must do that.

37599. Mr. Swinen—You say a good deal of the land would be given free?—So I understand.

37600. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—I understand Mr. Bryne was informed at the time of the deposition that the land would be given free?—Yes.

37601. That would largely increase the cost of the railway?—Yes.

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 15 o'clock.

Amount of the
local contribu-
tion required
to reduce the
Government
to support the
Ardara ex-
tension.

Mr. J. H. H.
Swinen,
M. INST. C.E.,
Civil Engr.,
Representative
of the
Ards
Railway
Committee.

Estimate of the
cost for the
proposed
Ardara ex-
tension.

No physical
difficulty in
the way of
construction.

SIXTY-FIRST PUBLIC SITTING.—FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Offices, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART., Chairman, Right Hon. LORD FORSTER, P.C.; Sir HERBERT JERVIS, K.C.M.G.; Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON FOR, C.B.; Mr. THOMAS SEXTON; Mr. W. M. ACWORTH; and Mr. JOHN AUDLEY FREDERICK ASPINALL;

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

Chairman.—We have had a meeting this morning, and we have practically decided that the railway companies must be prepared to commence their case at the beginning of April. The date is not yet fixed, and before we fix the date the Commissioners would furnish a list of the witnesses they propose to call, and also abstracts of their evidence, to be in the hands of the Commissioners some time before the evidence is given. Now, we thought it desirable to give you this lengthened notice, so that you will have ample time to make your preparations. We are of opinion that we shall finish what we call public evidence in January.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Thank you, Sir Charles. That is what I really wanted to know. That will give us ample time.

Chairman.—Ample time. And it is to be understood that the abstracts of evidence will have to be furnished precisely as they have been in the case of traders and others, before the dates are fixed.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—Certainly, Sir Charles.

Chairman.—And, with regard to January, we shall sit in Dublin, as at present arranged, from the 20th to the 17th inclusive, the 16th or 17th, the day may, perhaps, be altered; but this is merely to give you the information.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—I see.

Chairman.—So you understand, Mr. Barrington, that you will have plenty of time, the months of February and March.

Mr. Croker Barrington, Solicitor.—I thoroughly understand, sir. We are much obliged. That is what we really want.

Chairman.—Now the Secretary will read a resolution.

Mr. Shanahan (Secretary to the Commission).—I have been directed to read the following resolution, passed by the Newry Urban District Council, on the

14th of October, 1907.—“On the motion of Mr. Felix O’Hagan, yeas, seconded by Mr. Robert Long. Resolved—That this Council desires to express its strong disapproval of the existing rates charged by the railway companies, showing another strong reason for the pressure of the railways by the State.”

Secretary.—Mr. Ball wishes to make an explanation.

Mr. George de Bolla Ball.—Mr. Chairman, with reference to the figures I handed in yesterday, it might imply that there was some carelessness in preparing them, and I have brought down the Government printed book, which shows the rate per ton per mile in Class A as 1 10 of a penny.

Chairman.—Therefore the mistake is not yours, but that of the Government document.

Mr. Ball.—Not mine, but of the Government document.

Mr. Taffeur.—I think if you carefully examine those figures printed there you will see that the type is imperfect, and that it really is not 1, but 4, or was intended to be 4.

Chairman.—At any rate, we perfectly understand how the mistake occurred.

Mr. Ball.—Might I further say that on account of that table being found to be wrong, I withheld a lot of other evidence relating to over maximum rates, varying rates for the same description of goods, and charging on a scale of rates with two or more classification rates taken together, at the rate of the higher. If the first calculation had been wrong there might have been error in the other cases, and I did not bring that forward. And perhaps at some future time the Commission would allow me to bring this forward.

Chairman.—We will consider that.

Mr. Ball.—There is a large volume of them, so great that we can hardly believe they are accidental.

Chairman.—Thank you.

Mr. S. M. MACRODY, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

37502. You are a justice of the peace and a member of the Londonderry County Council.—I am, sir.

37503. And you appear on behalf of the County Council.—I do.

37504. Now, what is the trade in which you are engaged?—I have been engaged for the last fifty years in the corn and milling trade, and also very extensively in farming.

37505. And in what particular district in Ireland is your trade carried on?—The central portion of the County of Londonderry, the towns of Linsavady, and also the port of Londonderry.

37506. Well, being engaged in the milling industry, of course you have a large traffic in coal?—Yes, we have.

37507. Now, with regard to rates generally for coal and materials, do you consider them reasonable?—I do not, sir. I consider that coal ought to be reduced. As a matter of fact, the rate from Londonderry to Linsavady, station to station, is 2s. 8d. per ton, the distance being really up to thirteen miles. At Londonderry the Midland and Northern Counties are on the wrong side of the water, on the Waterside side, and the consequence is that there is either train or cartage as a rule, 7d. to 1s. Of course sometimes

coal may be brought over in some of the small steamers to the railway wharf, but that very seldom happens.

37508. I think you were a director of the late Deangal Railway Company?—I was so, for some years, and I was chairman of one of the branch lines.

37509. One of the branch lines?—The Linsavady to Buncrana Railway.

37510. Now, with regard to through rates, have you any knowledge of the through rates in operation between Ireland and England?—I have a very lengthened experience, sir, because I think it was mainly through representations that I made to the late Mr. Cotton, who was then manager of the Northern Counties system, that he was enabled to make arrangements by which the system of through rates to inland stations in England should be extended to inland stations in Ireland.

37511. And the extension of these rates that you refer to must have been of considerable advantage to the trade and agriculture of Ireland?—I consider of enormous advantage.

37512. And the more there are the better?—Only two of the North of England lines refused to give through rates, one being the North-Eastern and

Nov. 15, 1907.
Resolutions of the Newry Urban District Council read by the Secretary.

Explanation by Mr. George de Bolla Ball (a previous witness).

Mr. S. M. MACRODY, J.P., Representative of the Londonderry County Council.

The advantage of having more through rates to English stations.

Dec. 15, 1905.

Mr. S. M. Murray, F.R.,
Representative of the
Londonderry
County
Council.

Irish extension
traffic greatly
developed
especially on
the Northern
Coastline line.

The abolition
of first class
and a consequent
reduction in
1st and 2nd
class fares
suggested

Ultimate result
would be
conducive to
the
company.

Complaint as
to delays from
bad passenger
train connections
on cross-country
train journey.

The London-
derry and
Strabane
Canal.

The bulk of
the coal and
grain traffic
carried by
canal owing
to the rates
being lower
than by
railway

Withdrawal of
the coasting
steamer
service.

Railway rates
reduced during
the existence
of the
service.

the other the Staffordshire line. They have hitherto refused to look, except to the ports.

37613 Oh, I think we have had it in evidence that recently the North Eastern have come into the arrangement.—Well, I have had no indication yet, sir. I hope they have, because I do a lot of business with Hull, and up to the present time we have not been able to book through Hull.

37614 Now you have taken an interest in the railways in Ireland and in the arrangements and rate facilities?—Yes, sir, I have always done so.

37615 Do you think that more could be done in connection with excursion fares generally in Ireland than is done at present?—Well, I think as far as my knowledge goes, that the excursion traffic has been very greatly developed, and that refers especially to the line of which I have had the greatest experience, the Northern Counties. In point of fact the late Mr. Cotton was the originator of the excursion system.

37616 Do you consider that the second class accommodation in Ireland is necessary?—I do not. I think it would be an advantage to confine the accommodation to first and third.

37617 First and third, at the existing fares?—Well, I think the fares might very advantageously be slightly reduced. I believe that the working expenses would be considerably reduced by the abolition of the second-class carriages, because my experience is that a great many of our trains are running almost empty, and yet they must put on the second-class accommodation.

37618 And from your experience as a railway director for a great number of years, and as chairman of a branch line, do you consider that those reductions would ultimately be remunerative to the companies?—I do, sir.

37619 That they would tend to increase the traffic?—Would tend to increase the traffic, undoubtedly.

37620 Because in the first place you think the expenses might be reduced by the abolition of second-class carriages?—They would.

37621 And that a saving would thus be effected, and that a reduction of the first and third-class fares, what you would call a reasonable reduction, would tend largely to increase the traffic?—Yes, I believe it would.

37622 Now, from your knowledge and experience as to the connections of railways with other railways, do you consider that on the whole they are satisfactory in your district?—I think they are extremely bad, sir, and I will give you an instance of it. My eldest daughter, in Larnacady, takes her horse to Hollymount, a place near Ballymore, and it takes her two days to go up there, and she has to pass over five separate lines of railway, the distance, as the crow flies, from our place being perhaps about 100 miles. She starts by the Midland and Northern Counties to Londonderry; from Londonderry to Enniskillen by the Great Northern Railway of Ireland; from Enniskillen to Coleraine by the Sligo and Lister, and then she passes over a short distance of the Great Southern and a short distance of the Midland Great Western of Ireland.

37623 Five lines?—And the horsebox is generally detached at nearly every place, and she has to wait a long time. In fact she would go to the very extreme south of England very much easier.

37624 Now you have a canal competing with the railway from Londonderry?—From Londonderry to Strabane we have a canal.

37625 Do they take traffic on it?—Oh, yes; very extensive traffic. Nearly all the coal to Strabane is brought up by the canal, and by far the greater portion of the grain is brought up by the canal.

37626 Are the rates for carrying them lower than on the railway?—Oh, the rates are very much lower. It is rather difficult to find out exactly what the rate is, because on large consignments they make special rates, but I think you might take it that the rate generally speaking, is eighteenpence a ton on fairly large consignments.

37627 Between Londonderry and Strabane?—Between Londonderry and Strabane.

37628 Now you refer to the coasting steamers between Londonderry and several other places. Are those steamers running now?—No, sir. They have been withdrawn during the last summer.

37629 While they were running, the railway rates, I believe, were considerably reduced to meet that competition. We have got a lot of evidence on that

subject?—Yes, sir. I do not think that I need go over that. I think you have already heard it.

37630 Now, do you know anything about rates, we will say from one inland town to another, in Ireland, and do you consider those rates satisfactory?—I do not, sir. They are very high, indeed, and it is most difficult to get a through rate quoted.

37631 That is to say, from one Irish town to another?—From one Irish town to another. As a matter of fact, I may perhaps explain that I have been in the habit of sending my oatmeal and oats by Laird's steamers from Londonderry to Heysham and from Heysham to Dublin, owing to the fact that I could not afford to pay the Great Northern Railway the rate they require.

37632 Do you mean to say that is an actual transaction?—It is, sir, I am sorry to say, a transaction that occurs nearly every week.

37633 Would you just make that perfectly plain, and first of all where is the traffic from?—The traffic originates from Larnacady.

37634 Very well—it passes by the Midland Railway to Londonderry, and the rate that I pay to Londonderry, Watermark, is 3s. 6d. a ton; to cross the bridge to the steamer, 7d. a ton; and the Laird's have been in the habit of carrying for me at 7s. 6d. a ton from Londonderry to Dublin.

37635 Mr. Acworth?—Via Heysham?—Yes.

37636 Chairman—Londonderry to Dublin via Heysham?—Yes, sir, that is the Midland port. And during the time the small tramp steamer was on I was constrained to send my traffic in that way. As the Laird's had given me this rate a long number of years ago, perhaps twenty years ago, when I could not do any better, and they behaved very decently to me in this traffic, I did not think it right for me to do so. The tramp steamer, I believe, would have carried it to Dublin for perhaps, I can hardly say the figures, but about 4s. or 5s.

37637 And what did it cost to get this particular traffic that you refer to from Londonderry to Dublin by the route you have mentioned?—It cost the figure I have named—3s. 6d. to the Midland Railway; 7d. for train dues, to the steamer; and 7s. 6d. by the steamer via Heysham to Dublin.

37638 11s. 7d. is that?—Yes.

37639 What would it be by the railway route?—Well, of course, the same thing would apply in the first instance. I would first have to pay for getting it from Larnacady to Londonderry, not getting a through rate from Larnacady.

37640 Not from Larnacady to Dublin?—No.

37641 Why?—Because they refused to give it.

37642 But if you had sent it by rail what would it cost, can you tell us?—The first two items that I have mentioned, the 3s. 6d. and the 7d., would apply; that is 4s. 1d. And then the rate at present quoted from Londonderry to Dublin is 8s. 4d. in 6-ton lots and 17s. 6d. in anything under 6-ton lots. This rate, I should mention, the 8s. 4d. rate, has been the result of the small tramp steamer's competition, because they would not give the rate before, certainly. I have never asked them, because I was really so disgusted with them twenty years ago when I made this arrangement with the Laird's, and I have never gone near them since.

37643 Sir Herbert John?—That is a difference between 8s. 4d. and 7s. 6d. is that?—Yes.

37644 Mr. Acworth?—Would not Belfast be the natural route from Larnacady?—If there was through connection by Antrea junction. I believe there has been a rate given, but I have never applied for a rate by Antrea junction.

37645 I believe the Midland would naturally prefer to carry over their own line?—If they would take it; yes.

37646 They would get a much larger haul than if they took it to Londonderry?—They would.

37647 You do not know whether there was any through rate that way?—I believe there was a through rate given by Antrea junction, but I have no actual knowledge of it.

37648 Chairman—Then is it your opinion that the Midland trade of Ireland is injured in any way by the want of these through rates?—It is, decidedly.

37649 And by the amount of the rates?—Yes.

37650 And you think there might be more traffic if there were through rates, and those rates put on a reasonable basis?—Yes, I am certainly of that opinion.

37654. Now, coming to general questions as to railway traction, is it your opinion that it would be to the advantage of Ireland if the railways were owned by the State?—Well, there are some differences of opinion on that subject.

37655. I am only asking your opinion?—My own personal opinion, and the opinion of, probably, nineteen-twentieths of the members of our County Council, is that the railways should be acquired by the State. In fact, I entirely agree with Lord Brunsy's opinion, as expressed at the late meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Liverpool, which I have no doubt you, gentlemen, are aware of. Perhaps, if you will allow me, I will read what he said.

37656. We know what he said. But at any rate you are strongly of opinion that it would be to the advantage of Ireland if the railways were owned by the State?—I am, very strongly, Sir.

37657. And you say that, having been a railway director for a great number of years, and also chairman of a branch railway?—I do.

37658. Now, I do not know that you can improve on what you said. You have given your opinion very clearly on that point?—I was merely going to say, Sir, that our Indian railways have, I think, proved that State-owned railways have been a great success.

37659. Indian?—Yes.

37660. We have had a great deal of evidence about Australia and New Zealand, and other railways too. With regard to the Railway Commissioners' Court, do you consider that a satisfactory tribunal for dealing with disputes between traders and railway companies?—I do not, Sir; because it is an inaccessible and expensive.

37661. Have you any considered what, in your judgment, would be an improvement upon that for Ireland?—Well, I think there are several ways in which the matter could be simplified. To begin with, I suppose the Railway Commissioners would hardly have time to go round periodically to listen to the complaints of the traders, and on the other hand I think that, perhaps, a small Commission, something like the present Land Commission, that goes round the country, could visit the chief centres, such as Belfast, and Dublin, and Cork, and Londonderry, and some other large towns where traders could only bring any grievances then before them, and that would be of great advantage.

37662. Would you be disposed to leave cases of that kind to be settled by a County Court Judge?—Well, I think that in a great many cases a County Court Judge would be thoroughly competent to do it, but some of them would not. There are County Court Judges and County Court Judges. There is a great difference among them. Our own County Court Judge in Londonderry, I think, would be very competent, Judge O'Connell, but I know some of the County Court Judges that, I think, would not be competent.

37663. At any rate, you think that the present Railway Commissioners' Court is not adapted to the requirements of this country?—It is not, Sir.

37664. And that some cheaper and easier tribunal, more adapted to the wants of the country, should be appointed?—Yes, a more accessible tribunal.

37665. And an Irish tribunal?—And an Irish tribunal.

Examined by Mr. SHERIDAN.

37666. Do you grow wheat?—No, we have discontinued growing wheat.

37667. Only oats?—Only oats and barley; very largely maize.

37668. And all this traffic which you send, not by railway to Dublin, but by sea to England and back again to Dublin, is oatmeal?—Oatmeal and occasionally corn.

37669. What effect had the running of the coasting steamers on the railway rates from Londonderry to Dublin, so far as affected you?—It did not affect me, Sir, because I have always followed a line that I have very satisfactorily dealt with, that is, the Land line from Londonderry.

37670. I understand that you, all the time, send that traffic via Ballyshannon?—I did, Sir.

37671. And if you had chosen to send it by rail to Dublin during the running of those steamers, was there such an improvement in the rates as would have been sufficient to enable you to do it satisfactorily?

37672. I think the rates would have been considerably reduced, because the steamers generally cause a general reduction of rates.

37673. Do you know whether, since the cessation of the steamers, the railway rates have been again increased?—I do not, from my own personal knowledge, but I have heard that they have been.

37674. Now, as between Linsavady and Coleraine—an example of the curious and damaging inequalities which appear to be necessary incidents of the present railway system—how does the disparity of rates from Londonderry to Linsavady on the one hand, and to Coleraine on the other, affect the sales of your output?—It has simply resulted in the fact that while we formerly did a large business in Coleraine and towns adjacent to Coleraine, we are entirely cut off from that now, because the railway company, in order to meet the competition of the steamers, have been carrying at rates from Londonderry to Coleraine even lower than the rates from Londonderry to Linsavady.

37675. You are half way from Londonderry to Coleraine?—We are half way to Coleraine.

37676. And they carry the grain so cheaply to Coleraine that you have no market in Coleraine, or between Coleraine and Linsavady?—No; it has shut me out altogether.

37677. They might as well have raised a wall of brass against you on that side?—About the same thing, Sir, but at the same time, as a reasonable man, I can understand the thing, because they had either to carry the grain cheaply to Coleraine or not carry it at all.

37678. Oh, yes, but the question here is the rate to Linsavady?—Yes.

37679. Does it not appear to you, that though it may be reasonable from a railway point of view in the case of sea competition, to give a low rate to one town, that does not justify them in imposing such a high rate on a nearer town, which has no sea competition—as to artificially destroy or diminish trade?

—Well, my own opinion is that where they are obliged by force of circumstances to reduce the rate to one town (take the instance you have given, the town of Coleraine), they should give a corresponding reduction to the nearer town, to the inland town, which is half way.

37680. But so long as railways are private property, worked for profit only, and so long as they find themselves obliged to allow low rates by competition at one point, do you not think that they will always avail themselves of their freedom to impose much higher rates at points where there is no competition, and that the only escape from that is by a public system?—A public system.

37681. Which, if it could not entirely abolish such evils, might minimize them?—Yes, I agree in that view. In fact I am of opinion that, taking my own classification at the common rate for grain, a graduated scale, say, commencing at 2d. per ton per mile with a minimum charge of 10 miles, and of a half-penny per ton per mile of 150 to 200 miles would meet very much what I may call the justice of the case; but that could only be carried out by the unification of the railways, or State ownership.

37682. First, unification, which ends contending interests in railway transport, and secondly, public administration, which, while it might have to provide, say, at Coleraine for sea competition, just like private ownership, would, at the same time, take note of the circumstance that Linsavady should be allowed to live?—Exactly so.

37683. I think you have put it strongly that inland rates in Ireland are generally too high, and that they so materially prejudice the progress of that undeveloped country, that that is a sufficient reason for the substitution of public ownership of the lines for the present system?—Yes, I am of that opinion.

37684. Of course you have noticed this, that the inland rates in Ireland operate, as we might say, in conjunction with the through rates into Ireland, and that imported goods are carried into Ireland from points in England at rates comparatively so low that the high inland rate does place an artificial difficulty in the way of the Irish manufacturer?—Oh, I rather think it does.

37685. Does it not follow that these high inland rates must be reduced to something like a parity, proportionately speaking, with the low import rates

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. S. M. Murray, J.P.,
Representative
of the
Londonderry
County
Council.

The importance
of sea
competition on
the rates,
Londonderry
to Linsavady
and to
Coleraine.

Proposed
extension of the
low rates
caused by
water competition
to adjoining
towns.

The probability
of unification
and public
administration
of the railways
ensuing
more equitable
arranging of
rates.

Irish railway
rates too high
compared with
through rates
into Ireland.

Nov. 18, 1907.

Mr. S. M. Maunsell, J. P., Representative of the Londonderry County Council.

Continental state aided competition with Irish food products in the English market.

Reduction of 50 per cent. in potato rates in East Prussia announced.

The private ownership system previously not of profit making.

Telegrams of the shareholders were not stated.

The physical extent of the Irish railways not too great for unified administration.

Federated treatment of parts by Irish companies.

Countries having State-owned railways as a whole considered with their working.

The Italian railways recently acquired by the State as exceptions.

before Irish manufacturers can develop?—Yes, certainly.

37682. Then, on the other hand, the through rates from Ireland into England, beneficial as they have been as compared with the want of through rates, have to compete with a very low system of through rates on food products to Great Britain from abroad?—They have, undoubtedly, and, as an idea just of State ownership, perhaps I might be allowed to quote an item in which we are largely interested as Ireland—potatoes. I take this from a private circular from Hamburg of the 20th October, last month. "Potatoes. The market rules exceedingly firm. There is a rather active and general demand from England, and prices are tending upward. In East Prussia the crop has turned out almost a failure, and the Government has allowed a reduction in the railway rates of 50 per cent. to this district to facilitate matters."

37683a. Mr. Seaton.—Exactly.

37683. Chairman.—What is the date of that?—20th of October, sir.

37683a. Mr. Seaton.—The public administration takes note of the public needs?—Yes.

37684. Generally and in localities?—Yes.

37685. No private administration organized for profit, taking note of nothing but profit, and reducing rates according to the degree of competition or imposing rates according to the degree of freedom that they have to impose them, could do that?—The real fact of the matter is that they must study the interests of the shareholders, and that they cannot afford to do it, and that in a system of State ownership or nationalization there would be simply a sort of wholesale dealing as against retail dealing. The present railway companies in Ireland you may call retail traders, and by a system of nationalization you would have the railways as a wholesale concern, you might say, and I think that the railways of all the railways in Ireland would not, perhaps, very much exceed the Great Western of England.

37686. The railways of Irish railways corresponds pretty nearly to that of most of the Australian States, where there are unified systems?—The late Mr. Matheson, who was a friend of mine, told me that he could manage all the State railways of that very much easier than he did the Midland Railway of England. Of course you can understand that from his point of view, for he was king of the country, and could make whatever arrangements he liked.

37687. We may take it from the evidence of experts, with regard to the lines of Australia, and many other countries, that the physical extent of the Irish lines would not interpose any difficulty in the way of single management?—Well, I suppose you are all aware of what the late Sir George Lindsay said on one occasion.

37687a. Chairman.—We have all heard that.

37688. Mr. Seaton.—At any rate, we may go so far as to say that if he did not take two days' fishing every week, but worked six days a week, the railways of Ireland could certainly be managed by a capable manager?—Certainly.

37689. Is not the fact that each big railway has some port or another which gives it long mileage for traffic, and that it sends all traffic as far as possible to that port, to the detriment or injury of other ports?—We, in Londonderry, have had a very sad experience of that.

37690. Is that compatible with the public interest?—It is not.

37691. And should not the public have a transit system fair and equal between all, giving all a chance to live, as far as practicable?—I perfectly agree with that.

37692. You have said that State-owned railways have been a great success. Have you noticed this, that we do not hear from any country in the world, in which State-owned railways exist any expression of dissatisfaction with them or of desire to go back from the public to the private system?—I think that is so, with the possible exception of Italy.

37693. But it is only in the last year or two that the Italian Government have taken over the lines from the private companies, and the evils with which the railways are charged may be gradually numbed by the public management. They have not had time to remove all the faults of the private system?—I quite agree with you.

37694. Is not it the fact, on the other hand, that in the two great countries where private railways still prevail, as a survival—Great Britain and the United States—there is more dissatisfaction expressed with the working of the railways than in all the rest of the world besides?—Certainly, we hear far more about it.

37695. I should like to ask you, in conclusion, whether if we had a financial arrangement for the nationalization of the Irish lines, and for placing them under public control, you would think it important that there should be an Irish authority—an authority possessing the confidence of the Irish people there, for settling the rates and fares, and for securing that the profits accruing from the railways should be available for the reduction of rates and fares, and the perfecting of the transit system?—Well, I may be prejudiced; but I am rather in favour of a thoroughly experienced English general manager. We had an Irish general manager on the Northern Counties within my recollection, and the old system was regularly run down till the late Mr. Cotton came over, and it may be prejudiced, but I am rather in favour of a thoroughly experienced manager from England.

37696. We do not differ at all on that point, that the most experienced managers are to be found in England. I think the three principal railway managers in Ireland are Englishmen, are they not?—I think they are.

37697. Surely those men, who have proved their competence, and who have been trained by long experience in England and Scotland, would be as acceptable to an Irish authority as any Irishman would be, if they found that their competence was superior?—I suppose they would.

37698. Now, if the Imperial Government became the direct owner of the lines, would there not be some apprehension, should you say, from your knowledge of Irish public finance, that the profits of the railways might be appropriated to some Imperial, and not to Irish uses, and would you not think it important that the matter should be so handled that the profits from year to year should be certainly available for the perfecting of the transit system in Ireland, and reduction of Irish rates, and not be allocated to any non-Irish use?—I have no fear of not getting fair play from England.

37699. But if the Imperial Parliament acquired the lines, there might be a disposition to treat the profits as Imperial property?—Well, my opinion about the acquisition of the Irish railways by the State is that they should pass over to the State in exactly the same way as the Telegraph system has passed to the Post Office, which is working very satisfactorily.

37700. You bear in mind that the Irish rates would require reduction?—Yes.

37701. And you bear in mind that the great finance of the English companies has had something to do with making the disparity between low through rates into Ireland and high inland rates. Would you not think it important that some Irish authority should be appointed who should have the power of settling the rates and have the control and use of the profits?—Well, I think that probably a mixed Board would be the best of all, because, of course, the acquisition of Irish railways would only be possible by means of capital guaranteed by England, and it would be only fair that the man who is liable for the responsibility should have a strong voice in the matter.

37702. But if Ireland assumed financial responsibility, to the satisfaction of the Treasury, in respect of a loan from the Treasury, do you think that in that case she ought to have sole use of the railway profits for the purpose of securing railway transit in Ireland?—I am afraid Ireland could not assume responsibility.

37703. I am putting it that she could satisfy the Treasury, which is not easily satisfied. Suppose, by obtaining special power to strike a rate or in any other way Ireland assumed responsibility in a way satisfactory to the Treasury, would you say that in that case it would be fair that the profits which might be acquired by better management of the railways should be applied to Irish use?—Well, you ask me about a question that would hardly be likely to arise, because I do not think it would be possible for Ireland to guarantee the large sum of money which would be required.

37704. Well, Mr. Commissioner Stevenson admitted, and I think the Treasury would not question, that if there were a central authority in Ireland, with the power of striking a rate and with the revenue of the railways as well as at its disposal, that would be a satisfactory security?—Well, that may be his opinion.

37705. But, surely, the Corporations of Ireland at present are able to float stocks at 35 and 35 per cent. simply on the security of their municipal rates; and, the security of the rates is an indefeasible security?—Yes, it is indefeasible.

37706. An indefeasible security. The Treasury would admit so much?—In order to raise money for a transaction of this sort Imperial credit would have to be made use of in the same way as it is made use of for raising money with Land Stock.

37707. But surely, the Treasury might lend to an Irish authority, and the Irish authority might give security for the interest and sinking fund to the satisfaction of the Treasury, and if the Treasury were satisfied who else would have a right to object?—But that is another point.

Examined by Mr. A. WORMS.

37708. I gather that your wish in regard to State purchase is that it should be an Imperial authority in some shape or form?—Yes, that is so.

37709. That being so, you would consider that the Imperial authority ought to manage or control the management?—That is so.

37710. You are aware, of course, that we have heard a great deal of evidence here to the effect that the English Imperial Government ought to be kept out of it altogether, and that it ought to be managed by Irishmen?—I rather think that if the Imperial Government contribute the money they ought to have the control.

37711. That seems a logical argument, but we have been told by a great many witnesses here that if the Imperial Government had anything to do with it, the people of Ireland would not mind them paying the bill, but if they had anything to do with the management Ireland would be dissatisfied?—I do not see how any reasonable man could be.

37712. I am not concerned with that, but you know that a very large body of evidence has been to that effect?—I believe it has.

37713. So that what seems to be your proposal, that the Imperial Government should take it to charge, would not satisfy a large part of Ireland?—It is very possible.

37714. On the other hand, the proposal that the Irish people should do it, and the Imperial Government have nothing to do with it, would not satisfy you?—I do not think it could be carried out.

37715. That is the difficulty. You spoke of Mr. Milneson. Did you talk to him about the Australian arrangements of all?—Not very particularly, but he told me he had far less trouble in managing a very much longer railway there than he had with the Midland Railway of England, because they had so many points to attend to.

37716. In other words, competition made him work hard here, and where he did not get competition the work was more easy?—That is about it.

37717. Do you think that in a new country a man should be allowed to take it easy because there is no competition?—I think, as far as I can understand, the railway service out there gives more satisfaction, but I cannot speak from actual knowledge.

37718. Did you not discuss with him the question of political interference?—I did not.

37719. Then I will not ask you anything about it. You mentioned that you desire through rates for your main trade—that it should begin a 3d. a mile for short distances and gradually run down, and you suggested 4d. for a long distance, if you wanted to get down to Cork. That seems to you a reasonable proposal, does it?—I think it does.

37720. Do you not know that precisely that system has been tried already on Prussian railways, and it had to be given up, because the agriculturalists in Cork, we will say, protested against the agriculturalists from Limavady getting into his district; it was East Prussia and the South German Provinces, as a matter of fact, but call it Limavady and Cork. Did you know that?—I did not.

37721. Would there not be some risk of the same sort of thing happening on a State system in your country? Would not one locality protest against the other being brought in to compete?—I do not think it would, because, speaking in reference to agricultural produce, it sometimes happens that in the South of Ireland they have a great surplus of one particular article, and in the North of Ireland they have a surplus of another article, so that there would be an interchange.

37722. But suppose there was a bad local crop of oatmeal, and there was a high price in the North, and the farmers had their price cut down because of the State dumping it in from the South?—I do not think that would arise.

37723. You spoke about India. I dare say you knew Mr. Robertson, on the Great Northern of Ireland, the general manager?—No, I did not.

37724. Did you ever read his report on India? You know he went out to report?—No, I did not.

37725. Then I will not ask you about that. Let us take another question. You agreed, I think, that whether it was Company or State, the Coleraine rates could not be put up, because sea competition kept them down?—I quite realize the fact that a railway company, in order to carry the goods, at all events, these opposed by sea competition, lower the rate.

37726. We need not use the word "company"; we may say "railway"?—Certainly.

37727. Do you think Limavady ought to come down to that level?—I think when such a state of things exists, which, generally speaking, is only temporary, because the steamer generally in the end has to go to the wall—whether it has been bought off or not we will not go into, but, at all events, the steamer is off now, but during the time the steamer is on, the rates are kept down.

37728. You would not think it proper that the State should cut the throat of the steamer, and then put up the rates to Coleraine? You would not like that?—I would not.

37729. Therefore the State would always have to keep the Coleraine rates down to a point where the steamer could not come in?—Yes, but on the other hand—

37730. Do not let us go into that. You agree that the State would have to keep the Coleraine rates down to the level presented by steamer competition?—Yes, or else let the steamer get the traffic. As a rule, steamers carry at ridiculously low rates, and generally speaking come to grief themselves.

37731. Do not say ridiculously low rates; I think you said Coleraine can get low rates because it has so much of steamer competition?—Yes.

37732. I think you said Limavady ought to come down?—Limavady ought to come down to some extent, not to the full extent.

37733. Then, Limavady rates would come down?—Yes.

37734. And the railway revenue would suffer?—Yes, it would.

37735. How is it to be made up?—The railway revenue must suffer. They must carry, you know, at these very cheap rates, to Coleraine.

37736. Yes, but what I want to know is that they manage to get a better profit, we will suppose, out of Limavady than out of Coleraine?—Simply because Limavady is—

37737. I am not disputing whether it is right or wrong, but you say Limavady must come down, too?—To some extent.

37738. To some extent?—It should be not to some extent.

37739. That is going to cost money to the railway?—It would.

37740. Whence is the money going to come from?—That is for the railway company.

37741. Supposing it is not the Company but the State, where are you going to get it then?—I think in all probability the State would not go into competition with the steamer, because it could afford to give as low rates as any steamer all over the country.

37742. Then it would keep the Coleraine rates up and get no profit—would lose the profit that it now makes?—You would practically have all the railways in Ireland working as one concern, and the State could afford to give lower rates, because, as I tried to point out, they could manage much cheaper. As a large wholesale concern, it could be managed very

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. S. H. Mowery, J.P., Representative of the Londonderry County Council.

The assembly in view induced by an competition as outcome of the existing railway system.

Effect on the railway revenue of an adjustment of rates on the basis of steamer competition charges.

The cutting of rates to meet an competition under a State system of nationalized coalfields improbable.

Nov. 12, 1907.

Mr. S. M.
Macarty, M.P.,
Representative
of the
Londonderry
County
Council.

much cheaper than the present system, which I may call a retail system, with so many different companies.

37741. Mr. Scroon.—And the low rates would develop traffic? They would undoubtedly develop traffic.

37742. Mr. Asworth.—And if it comes, then it would pay them, would it not?—They have so many expenses that they cannot afford it.

37743. You think there is great economy in management upon which you can draw?—Undoubtedly.

37744. Now I want to ask you another thing. The proposed railways, the railways that have got a good revenue, are in the North and North-east, practically?—To a great extent.

37745. They have got six and seven per cent. dividend and that sort of thing?—Yes.

37746. On the other hand, when you get down to the South and West, it is 3 per cent. or 3½. The Great Southern has got back to 4, and the Midland is 5. That is a part of the country that wants money; they want new railways and so on; we have heard a great deal about it?—Yes.

37747. Do you think the North-east would be quite satisfied if the profit on their railways was taken for the development of the South-west?—I do not think it would.

37748. It seems to me that if they are like other human beings in Ireland they might not be.

37749. Mr. Scroon.—Why should the development be limited to South-west? Would it not be universal?

37750. Mr. Asworth.—There would not be much money available from Clane to carry on subsidised developments in Ulster, would there?—I should not think so. Of course it depends greatly; there may be mineral developments there. For instance, in Kilkenny, they have a valuable anthracite coal, I believe. I may mention that I am a serious gas plant myself, and I have been thinking of getting Kilkenny coal because the Welsh coal has got to such an enormous price now.

37751. We have got to remember that the Great Southern has been looking at that coal for many years, and they say it would not pay to make a line there; they may be wrong, but that is what they think. Do you agree with me that if there is a surplus it is more likely to be a surplus earned at Ulster and spent in Munster than earned in Munster and spent in Ulster?—That is very likely. I am quite certain there are large mineral resources in the West. For instance, my brother is one of the largest shareholders of the Arigna Coal Mines, and the Arigna Coal Mines have returned all the capital to the shareholders.

37752. Of course we all hope that is true, and we will hope they will develop, but still we have got to agree to this, that it is out of the resources of the net earnings that are mainly made in the North and East that you are going to develop industries in the South and West. That is where the strong point of the revenue of the State railway is to come from?—Yes, the North-east would be the strong point.

37753. You would be using their revenue to develop the other part of the country—quite likely, perhaps?—I look upon this to a great extent as something for the benefit of the entire country.

37754. You agree with me that there might be a grievance in the North-east if they were used as a milk cow for the South-west. Just one other thing. Leaving out the question of whether it was State or private ownership, you spoke of third-class fares?—Yes.

37755. You spoke of Mr. Cotton. Mr. Cotton did a good deal in the way of reduction of fares on his railway?—He did.

37756. What is your view about the reduction of third-class fares? Do you think it an important thing for the development of the district to let people get about cheaper?—I think it is.

37757. Do you think it would develop much new traffic?—I think it would.

37758. You are in a pretty poor part of Ulster at Limerick?—By no means. We are in the Garden of Ireland.

37759. Perhaps I am wrong in saying Limerick, but a little further south is a pretty poor country, is it not?—No, not at all.

37760. Why is the railway so unprofitable?—Simply because like all branch lines it was made for the development of the country, and like all branch lines it was uncommensurate.

37761. If I remember rightly, it hardly did more than pay working expenses?—Yes, just about.

37762. That does not seem like any profit to the district. What I wanted to ask was, in your view, would a fare of, say, a halfpenny a mile for the sake of argument, develop a great deal of traffic that at present does not go at a penny?—I would not like to go down so low as a halfpenny, but I should say three farthings a mile would be a very proper reduction.

37763. I do not want to put you to a figure, or to put myself to a figure; the point I was at was this. Is there traffic which will not go at present rates that would go at lower rates?—I think in a great many cases the men would travel probably nearly as often again if they had lower rates.

37764. Put it in this way. We used to be told that in some parts of Ireland three or four men would go together and hire a car and drive along side the railway?—I believe they did.

37765. Does that happen nowadays?—No, it does not; but since the introduction of motor cars I think the railways are likely to be very considerably opposed.

37766. It has not come yet?—I often go up from Limerick to Londonderry by motor car, because I can go as quick as by train.

37767. But you are not an ordinary workman, you see?—It is always a question—

37768. Motor cars are not going to carry workmen to any great extent, I fancy?—I do not know.

37769. I wanted to get from you whether you thought that a considerable reduction on third-class fares would tap a stratum of traffic that at present is not much touched?—I think a moderate reduction would.

37770. You are not very sanguine?—I am not very sanguine. I should mention that the late Mr. Cotton gave very favourable market rates and encouraged the public in every way to attend the markets and fairs.

37771. With great success?—With great success, and judging from that, I should say that a slightly lower rate all round would be a great advantage; at any rate, the railways would not lose anything by it.

37772. You want to take off the second-class altogether?—I do.

37773. We have had evidence from people who attach very great importance to keeping the second-class because the third-class is so very unattractive?—I should keep up the third class.

37774. You see, it is the company rather than the carriage, you cannot improve that. They say they do not want to travel with people going to a cattle fair, or with people coming from a cattle fair?—There is something in that.

37775. Just a question about that Laird's carrying from Heysham; does the steamer go on to Dublin, or is there transhipment for Dublin at Heysham?—There is transhipment at Heysham.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON, F.R.S.

37776. With regard to this question of State ownership, I gather that you favour a Department under the Imperial Parliament rather than an Irish authority?—I would.

37777. With regard to the Government Departments in Ireland, in Dublin, the thirty or forty Departments—we will not argue as to the exact number; there seems to be a difference of opinion about it—the police, education, the Board of Works, the Local Government Board, and numerous other Boards, how your experience of the working of these Departments (I am not asking now from a political point of view, but speaking generally) been that they are so satisfactory that you think it would be desirable to bring in another Board with control over perhaps the most important function, or most important element of the whole working and life of the country?—I think a great many of the Boards in Dublin have done very good work; but some of them, like other Boards, have not been at all satisfactory.

The offering
of surplus
earnings under
a State-owned
system.

Probable de-
velopment of
the mineral
resources of
the country.

State owner-
ship to be a
benefit for
the whole
country.

The suggested
reduction of
third class
fares a means
of increasing
traffic.

37778 You are aware, no doubt, that statements of every shade of political opinion, Conservatives and Liberals, who have had experience in Ireland of these Departments have admitted that their administration has been wasteful, inefficient, extravagant, and very often out of sympathy with the requirements of the country. I think you must be aware that that has been expressed by men of every class of political opinion. My own opinion is that there is no great necessity now for Dublin Castle, because the two countries are so closely connected together.

37779 I am not on the question of Dublin Castle, but do you think that is a fair consideration to put upon the opinion of statements of both political parties—Conservatives and Liberals, Members of Parliament—that they have admitted that the system of administration—as at present conducted—is wasteful, inefficient, extravagant, and very often out of sympathy with the requirements and wishes of the people of the country. Is that a fair expression of their views?—I think it is moderately fair.

37780 I am glad you admit that, because I think it is universally admitted. There may be a difference of opinion as to how those defects are to be remedied, but I think it is universally admitted that there is great need, and great cause, and great room for improvement. Now I will take another point. You are aware that there has been one Department instituted in the last six or seven years which has been practically absolutely controlled by Irishmen—the Department of Agriculture—Irish officials throughout—practically all the Government grants controlled by the Council and the Board, who, whether nominated or elected, are entirely constituted of Irishmen. I would ask you, not looking at it from a narrow point of view, but remembering the difficulties which such a Department has had to encounter—the opposition in stating new theories, and factors of that kind—looking at all those, has your experience of the work done by that Department, on the whole, not been very satisfactory, and such as to entitle Irishmen to say that when they are given proper control and proper administrative authority they are quite capable of managing the work entrusted to them as well as people from the other side of the water?—I think the Irish Agricultural Department has been Irish well managed.

37781 Of course I admit they had great difficulties. They have had to struggle against conservative ideas on the part of the people whom they were trying to educate, but, making allowances for all those difficulties, on the whole, has it not been a great success?—Speaking generally, it has; and I think we, in the North of Ireland, do not require education so much as those in the South and West, the parts to which the Agricultural Board has been applied.

37782 Speaking as a North of Ireland man, I am sure you do not grudge that action. You, being in the happy position of not requiring the education, and the people in the South not being in the same happy position as yourselves, you do not grudge their getting those advantages, though it may cause some expense to yourselves?—Certainly not.

37783 I do not want to go into the question, but I think you will admit that the linen industry, which is the mainstay of the North of Ireland, would never have attained the success it has done if it had not been for many years largely subsidised in England. I think that is a point that is very often forgotten by Ulster men. They seem to think that their great industry is entirely due to their own efforts. I do not wish to disparage those efforts, but I think they forget that their prosperity is largely due to the fact that, in the infancy of their industries they were largely subsidised by Great Britain, when it did not suit its purpose to assist industries in other parts of the island. My friend Mr. Awerth (I do not wish to get into controversy with him, because I am afraid he would get the best of it) I think asked you whether the North of Ireland, which contributes a large proportion of the revenues of the railways, would not object to that revenue being used to assist the South. I think the argument would lose a great deal of weight if, as you contemplate, the railway system was put into the hands either of a State authority or of an Irish authority. There would be no great difficulty if the railways were taken over as a whole and administered either by the State or by a National Irish Department. That argument would not have

the same weight as if they remained in the hands of private companies?—Managed as a whole?

37784 When managed as a whole, they would look to the revenue as a whole, and they would be prepared to say—"We are deriving so much revenue from one part—one part of the system pays well, and that ought to go to making up any loss on the part of the system that pays badly."—Looking forward ultimately to the portion which is paying badly ultimately becoming a good paying transaction.

37785 At any rate, the State could afford to look at it from a broad point of view. I am quite aware that if a particular system of railway was likely to obtain money for such a purpose as lowering its rates in competition with other railways, there might be some little dissatisfaction on the part of those who found the money to having their earning devoted to assisting the others, but I think that would disappear to a large extent under such a system as I think you yourself approve of. You know that there has been a proposition from the General Council of County Councils, which is the only central authority—we need not go into the question as to whether it is the most satisfactory from all points of view, but at any rate it is the only representative body of the land in Ireland at present, and they have put forward a suggestion that if the land and buildings of Ireland which are valued at something like £15,000,000 for rateable purposes—were given as a security with the railways at the back of them as additional security, there would be no difficulty in raising such a sum of money at 3½ per cent. as would practically allow of the taking over of the whole of the Irish railways?—That may be the opinion of the Central County Council authority in Dublin, but I should not place very much reliance upon their opinion.

37786 But facts are facts, and figures are figures. The value of the land and buildings is £15,000,000, and capitalised at twenty years' purchase, that is £300,000,000; and in addition to that, you have the security of the railways themselves. You are aware that the counties of Ireland generally, and largely those in the poorest districts, have, for the last thirty years met guarantees given in respect of the interest on the capital cost of all those light railways involving a large annual expenditure with the greatest regularity. You are aware of that, are you not?—I am not aware of it, but it may be the case.

37787 You know that all these light railways through the West of Ireland and the North have been guaranteed, more or less, and the guarantee has been paid, and though there has been dissatisfaction on the part of these poor people, still they have met their obligations in the most honourable manner, that is, under the County Councils which took the place of the Grand Juries?—I cannot tell you, from personal knowledge.

37788 I think you may take it that it is so?—I have no doubt it is.

37789 That being the case, I think you will admit that the manner in which the County Councils have discharged their duties since the Local Government Act came into force—of course it has given dissatisfaction to some, but with regard to effecting economies and to any increase of burdens which they have laid upon the districts, I think you will admit that their operation has been satisfactory?—The County Councils of course have very great advantages over the old Grand Jury system in the fact of the grant alone, and the fact of their being a continuing body, but I think, speaking for the County of Londonderry—I was for fifteen years a member of the Grand Jury, and since the commencement of the County Council I was returned unopposed for the County Council—I take that rather as an honour, because the mere fact of being a Grand Juror was considered almost fatal to the return of any man on the County Council—I know that the ratepayers of the County of Londonderry now say they will be very glad to have the old Grand Jury back again, because their management was more economical.

37790 I think that is an exception. I am not arguing the point in favour of County Councils, but I think, looking at the returns of the working of those bodies, if you study the official reports, their work, from the financial point of view, has been a success, and it has not entailed an increase of expenditure or anything in the way of unjust charges, which at one time were anticipated. If you study

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. S. M. Murray, M.P., Representative of the Londonderry County Council.

The manager of advertising surplus earnings under public control of Irish railways.

The question of the capital to purchase the Irish railways being forthcoming on the security of the Irish rates.

County contributions to guaranteed lines in Ireland paid with regularity.

The Grand Jury system preferred to the County Council in Londonderry.

Nov. 25, 1907.

Mr. S. M. Macneary, *J.P.*,
Expressive
Line of the
London and
County
Council.

The presence
of the General
Council of the
County
Councils not
regarded as
satisfactory.

A reduction
in third class
fares recom-
mended as
a means of
increasing
traffic.

Substantial
reductions in
second class
fares made
on the
Northern
County
Railway.

the Government reports, I think you will find that what I have said is correct. My only point in making these remarks is that if there is any truth in those arguments, looking by the light of experience at the working of these local bodies, would not that justify you in having some confidence in a body which was representative of the whole of these Boards, such as the General Council; and if they were disposed to give a guarantee on the value of Ireland such as I speak of, of £500,000,000, could you not depend upon that guarantee being honestly fulfilled?—I am sorry to say that I have not the same confidence that you have in them. I may be wrong.

37791 I was only saying that you have certain facts to go upon, certain experiences to guide you, and in the light of those experiences I should have thought you would admit that if they kept up the same standard as the smaller bodies which they represent, there would be no fear of the future. However, I will not pursue that point any more. Now, with regard to second and third-class fares, the weight of evidence, as I dare say you have seen, has been that we have had very little expression of opinion in favour of the abolition of second-class; it has rather been that the reduction of the second-class fare would tend to bring the traffic from the third into the second. Do not you think the combined result of a considerable reduction of the second-class fare and of a smaller reduction of the third-class fare would be probable to the abolition of the second class altogether?—Well, on your line the late Mr. Cotton, when he was General Manager, reduced the second-class fare very considerably, and brought it down very near to the third.

37792 Mr. Lignoull—How near to the third?—Very near.

37793 Within 10 per cent.—Within about 10 per cent., and I do not think his action in that respect has increased the number of passengers in the second-class to any appreciable extent on the Northern Counties.

37794 Colored *Hutchinson Fox*—I have not got the figures, so I could not follow it. At any rate, if you brought down the third-class fare to something like 1d., if they carried four at 1d. it would pay the railway company just as well as carrying three at a penny at present does. Anything over four would be a profit?—Yes.

37795 But are you thinking that you would perhaps get five passengers where you now get three?—That is certainly my opinion.

Re-examined by Mr. SACREY

37796 I am sorry to trouble you again, Mr. Macneary, but I should think it a great public misfortune if this Commission, professedly instituted for the purpose of trying to mitigate the poverty of Ireland was successfully used as an agency for promoting political discord between the North and the South of Ireland—of which we have already had more than enough. It would be better that the Commission had never been appointed, than that such a result should follow. Now, you were asked about the local rates in Limerick and Galway. Suppose the United Railway Administration had to keep down the rates to Galway, they would have to reduce the rates to Limerick; and you said:—To some extent?—Yes.

37797 You were asked where that money would come from. Is not that just the reason—because private companies will not dilute their coffers for the purpose of lowering rates—that you want public ownership of the railways?—That is a great argument in favour of public ownership.

37798 Then it was suggested to you that under a public system, the North-East would provide the means whereby reductions would be given for the benefit of the other parts of the country.—That was the suggestion?—Yes, that was the suggestion.

37799 Now, I put it to you in the first place. Suppose a public system of railways were substituted for this private system, would not the saving out of which reductions might be made arise from the application of public credit by means of which the annual charge for capital should be much less than the net

profits are at present?—I think the savings would be very great indeed.

37800 What I mean is, that the first source of saving would be the application of the public credit for that purpose, whereby the annual charge on the capital, if the State took charge of the line, would be substantially less than the net profits at present, and thereby a surplus would be created?—I think there is no doubt that there would be.

37801 Very well. Would the North and East have any special proprietorship of that surplus? Would it not be a surplus obtained by public credit—that is the application of the credit of the whole of Ireland, not merely of the North-East of it, and the credit of England and Scotland, as well as of Ireland?—I think it would be a State transaction.

37802 Would the North-East of Ireland have any special proprietorship in that transaction?—I do not think they would.

37803 Then would not the substitution of united working of the railways, for the fragmentary working which at present exists, result in a great saving?—Yes, as I have said, wholesale trading, instead of retail, would result in a very large saving.

37804 Exactly. Would not the whole of Ireland contribute to the saving obtained by united working?—Yes.

37805 Not the North-east especially?—There are several items in which saving could be effected. All the rolling stock could be made in Ireland, and ultimately could be standardised, so that when renewals were made the required standard could be maintained.

37806 So that this surplus fund, created first by public credit, and secondly by united working, would be a fund obtained not in any special locality, but from the kingdom as a whole?—I think the surplus should certainly go to the development of the railways in Ireland.

37807 It would not be obtained in any special manner from any particular locality?—No, it would not.

37808 On the other hand, the reductions in the rates would be beneficial, not to the South and West alone, but to the North as well?—They would be given wherever required. Anything that benefits the South and West, must indirectly benefit the North and East.

37809 In the case of development of traffic under a State system, it would be either of the export trade or inland manufactures. Now, if it were a development of the export trade, which is chiefly in food products, would not all Ireland contribute to that as much as the North-East, or rather more?—It would, certainly.

37810 Therefore, so far as increased resources were due to the development of the cattle trade, the South and West of Ireland would contribute at least as much as the North-East?—The cattle trade is very extensive in the South—very much greater than what we have in the North.

37811 Therefore, so far as the development of the export trade is concerned, the South and West would contribute even more than the North. Again, suppose the reduction of the inland rates created a development of Irish manufactures—you are already fully developed in the North-East in manufactures that the probability is that any development arising from manufactures would arise in the South and West?—Yes, it is very possible.

37812 Therefore, on the whole, does it appear that there is an area of foundation for suggesting that the North-East would contribute specially to the benefit which other parts of the country received?—To some extent it might, but I do not think it would be so. Taken as a whole, I think it would be considered all over the country by State ownership.

37813 The fund for reductions would be derived from public credit and united working. The development would be derived from the general export trade and from manufactures which are much more open to development in the South and West than in the North, and therefore the work of Ireland at large would contribute to reductions of rates received?—That is so.

Mr. Deane—I do not desire to address Mr. Macneary on the subject any more.

Mr J. P. DOWDALL examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Nov. 15, 1901.

37813 I think you appear on behalf of the Westmeath County Council?—Yes.

37814 Are you a member of the Council?—Yes.

37815 Now, the Council have had under consideration the question which we are considering in this Commission, have they not?—Yes.

37816 Have you considered the question of through rates for goods into Ireland from England?—Yes.

37817 Have you any remark to make upon that subject?—Well, I am of opinion that they are not very much to the advantage of the country, that there is not a great deal to be gained by them. As a matter of fact, my own experience is that I work with local rates in, I should say, the majority of cases, and the reason why I do so is that I get a rebate made at Dublin by the English and Shipping Companies, and, on account of their rebates, the local rates come lower than the through rates.

37818 I do not quite follow what you mean by that?—Take the rate of 60s., say.

37819 From whence?—Take any English centre.

37820 Take Manchester to Cork, or Liverpool?—Anywhere you like. Take it, not to Cork, because there would be direct shipment, take it to Liverpool or any inland town, and take it that 60s. would be the rate, the rate to Dublin would be 40s., and the shipping company and the English companies combined give a rebate on that of 10s. a ton.

37821 Where do they give it to?—The customer; for instance, I get it, to my advantage, of course. Thus, the ordinary rate in Ireland, added to the charges, means the rebate, make it less than the through rate.

37822 I am bound to confess that I have not followed your answer yet. You talk about a rebate of 10s. a ton, who gives the rebate and who gets it?—The English carrying company gives the rebate.

37823 To whom?—To the person who pays the carriage, whether it is the consignee or the consignor.

37824 Do you know this of your own knowledge, or is it merely information received?—It is my own knowledge.

37825 Can you give me an instance, just one case where it has been done, and how it has been done?—Any one case you like?—I cannot just exactly quote the rates, but I think if Mr. Telford could give me any rates.

Mr. Telford. I do not know anything about rebates.

Witness.—On account of rebates, sometimes, and in connection with certain traffic, the through rates are higher than the local rate combined with the rebate.

37826 Mr. Accoath.—Less the rebate?—Less the rebate, of course.

37827 Mr. Telford.—Through rates from where to where?—Take my own case, way from Northampton to Mullingar.

37828 What traffic?—Foot traffic, boots and shoes.

37829 Chairman.—Let us take that as an instance?—Follow that on. Do you pay the carriage?—Yes.

37830 From Northampton to you station—Mullingar?—In that instance, there is a rebate of 10s. a ton paid by, say the Midland Company. They do pay it, it is an open thing.

37831 On that rate, from Northampton to Mullingar?—No, on the rate to Dublin they pay, and with the rate from Dublin to Mullingar it would be less. I am afraid I am not putting it clearly.

37832 Mr. Accoath.—The rate charged from Northampton to Dublin, you say, is 40s.?—Yes, out of which there is a rebate.

37833 Who gives you back the 10s.?—The English companies.

37834 The Midland do not carry to Dublin?—Yes, they do.

37835 Be it that?—And by the City of Dublin too.

37836 The Midland carry to Liverpool, and then by the City of Dublin Steam Packet?—Yes.

37837 Who gives you the rebate?—Their agent, their own agent.

37838 Do you mean the Midland of England?—Yes, it is a recognized thing.

37839 Chairman.—The Midland are not at Northampton?—Yes, take Leicester.

37840 Mr. Telford.—Will you explain what you

mean by saying that rebates in Ireland are the means by which English companies give an indirect benefit to the English manufacturer?—That is not the question, sir. The Chairman asked me a question which is not bearing directly upon that at all.

37841 Chairman.—You say that the through rates in Ireland are on the whole against the manufacturing interests of that country?—Yes.

37842 I want you to give us an example?—I say I have been informed, I heard from railway officials, that there is a greater proportion of the through rate paid to Irish railway companies than is apparent on division, and that the English companies credit Irish companies more than their local rates for the traffic. That is what that paragraph refers to.

37843 Let us go on and see. You have opened the question pointed about the rebate, and we are all rather interested in that question, but we want to see the operation of it, if you could tell me. I do not follow it yet. How does the Midland Railway of England give you the 10s.?—On the foreign?—cash.

37844 Mr. Telford.—On the through rate?—Oh, no.

37845 On what do they give it on their local rate?—The Midland Great Western Company have their local rates. I was there to Mullingar.

37846 What has the English Company to do with giving you a rebate on the local rate?—It is their own local rate, not on the rates from Dublin.

37847 What has the English Company got to do with it?—I did not say the English company had to do with Irish local rates.

37848 You said they gave a through rate?—On the local rate to Dublin—Northampton or Leicester to Dublin.

37849 Mr. Accoath.—You assign it by local rates. The Midland of England get the Dublin rate, which you tell me is 40s.?—Yes.

37850 Then they give you a rebate of 10s.; that leaves a net rate of 30s.?—Yes.

37851 Then you pay the local rate on to Mullingar—how much is that?—15s. 11d.

37852 That makes the rate which you actually pay 45s. 11d.?—Yes.

37853 Supposing you take the through rate from Northampton to Mullingar; what would it be?—The saving in the one you just quoted is about 2s. 4d. in the ton.

37854 Tell us what the through rate would be?—I do not prefer that; it is only general evidence I have given. If I had known you would have asked these questions, I would have had all the figures.

Mr. Telford.—I can give you the through rate, it is 60s. 4d., Northampton to Mullingar.

37855 Colonel Helyearson P.C.—What is the actual rate to Dublin? This gentleman speaks of the local rate.

Mr. Telford.—I have not that.

37856 Colonel Helyearson P.C.—You do not know it.

Mr. Telford.—No.

37857 Mr. Accoath.—Perhaps Mr. Telford could tell us whether it is probably right that the 10s. rebate off the local rates would bring it below the through rate.

Mr. Telford.—I do not know the figures, but I think it would, undoubtedly. I think that is unquestionable.

37858 Mr. Accoath.—In other words, there is not very much difference between the through rate and some of the local rates.

Mr. Telford.—Not 10s.

37859 Chairman.—(To the Witness).—Generally with regard to the rates and fares in Ireland, do you consider them excessive or high as compared with the rates in England?—Not very high, considering the amount of traffic they have, and the purposes for which the railway exists.

37860 Do you think it would be a great advantage to the people in this country if those rates could be reduced?—It would undoubtedly be an advantage.

37861 With regard to the connecting train services at various junctions, we have had evidence upon that that in many cases there is great delay; do you consider the arrangement satisfactory at junctions which you are acquainted with?—No. Take for instance the Great Southern and the Midland Great Western. Their connections are very bad.

Mr. J. P. Dowdall, Representative of the Westmeath County Council.

The through rates in Ireland against the manufacturing interests.

The Irish Railway Companies alleged to get more than their local rate in division of the cross-Channel through rates.

Allegation that a rebate of 10s. a ton is allowed by the Midland Railway Company of England on the rate for boots from Leicester to Dublin.

The Irish rates and fares not too high compared with profitable working on commercial lines.

Complaint as to bad train connections between the Great Southern and Western Railway and the Midland Great Western Railway system.

Nov. 15, 1897.

Mr. J. P. Dowdall,
Representative of the
Westmeath
County Council.

Instance of
facilities to
connection
from
Mullingar.

37627. Just give us an illustration of that!—You cannot get to the South of Ireland from Mullingar by Portlaoine sooner than 4.15 p.m. On the return journey there is only one connecting train leaving Portlaoine at 10.25 a.m. and arriving at Mullingar at 5.22 p.m. The railway distance is only forty-two miles. As this connection does not run in conjunction with any trains coming from South of Maryboro' (excepting Waterford line, and starting at 6.45 a.m.), it is an impossibility to arrive in Mullingar in the one day from stations on the main line of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

37628. According to that you cannot go there and back in a day?—It is absolutely impossible. You cannot get from the South of Ireland to Mullingar in a day, and the distance between Portlaoine, the principal junction on the Great Southern and Western, the principal junction on the Midland Great Western, is only forty-two miles.

37629. That is so far as passenger trains are concerned, and I suppose that would apply to live stock?—Undoubtedly.

37630. It applies in the same way?—Just the same.

37631. The farmers in Ireland, for instance, and graziers who want to attend the Southern fairs cannot do it?—They are absolutely shut off.

37632. Have you any competition at Mullingar?—Yes, the Royal Canal passes through Mullingar; but it is the property of the Midland Great Western Company, and the competition is comparatively small in connection with it.

37633. Your dealings are principally with the Midland, I suppose?—Yes.

37634. Do you find their arrangements pretty satisfactory?—Personally and generally speaking, I have always found the Midland Company anxious to meet people as far as they possibly can.

37635. And to give you facilities so as to cultivate the trade as much as they can?—As much as they can, and as much as you could expect from a proprietary railway company.

37636. Still, you say, even with all the best intentions, greater facilities and lower rates would be a great advantage to the district?—Necessarily, for the development of the country.

37637. You are of opinion, I suppose, that the existing companies being private companies, it is not fair to expect them to make large reductions in rates?—I do not think it is.

37638. In the interests of their shareholders?—It is other people's money, and expecting, of course, as they must expect—to give a return for it, I do not think they could give much reduction in rates.

37639. What is your remedy for the whole thing? What do you suggest as a remedy? Do you think it would be better if the railways were unified into one system?—Unified.

37640. Yes, into one system?—One system, yes.

37641. Under what authority?—Controlled by an Irish Board absolutely.

37642. An Irish authority?—Yes.

37643. In fact, the nationalisation of the railways?—Yes, under the control of an Irish Board.

37644. Is that the opinion of your Council?—Yes, it is the expressed opinion of the Council.

37645. Therefore you represent that view as the view of the Westmeath County Council?—Yes.

37646. You think that if that took place it would tend to develop the other industries in Ireland and generally promote more prosperity than exists at the present time?—Yes, because the County Council believe that the railway companies would extend for the development and benefit of the country, and could be made the means to a great extent of developing; that it would create a preference for Irish manufactures, and carry Irish manufactured goods much cheaper than imported goods. The County Council are strongly of opinion that the Board should have the power to create a preferential rate for Irish produce and internal traffic.

37647. I suppose I need scarcely ask you this, but your Council is of opinion that reasonable, proper, and fair terms should be offered to the existing companies?—Yes, subject, of course, to proper inspection and in conjunction with the rate of depreciation on the existing stock.

37648. At any rate that no injustice should be done?—No, the desire is absolutely fair play, and in fact liberal terms.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Fox

37649. With regard to the want of connection that you speak of between the Midland Great Western and the Great Southern and Western, have you made any representation to those two Companies to try and get them to meet your wishes?—No; at one time, when there was talk of opposition and of a new railway being made, there were greater facilities given, but those greater facilities ceased to exist when the Act of Parliament authorising the extension of the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway to Mullingar passed.

37650. In what year was that suggested?—About ten years ago.

37651. At that time the companies, according to you, did consider the question of providing better connections?—They did.

37652. As soon as the opposition disappeared, they abandoned the idea?—Yes.

37653. And the want of this connection seriously hinders not only passenger traffic, but goods and cattle traffic?—I believe so.

37654. You said that as far as the Midland Great Western are concerned you always find them willing to meet you to the best of their ability?—As far as they reasonably can.

37655. In other words, their goodwill is only limited by the length of their purse and the obligations they are under to their shareholders?—I should say so.

37656. I gather that you are of opinion that if you could put the Irish railways under one hand, those obligations would disappear, and the Irish railways, operating as a whole, could work in the interests of the community?—Yes, and much more commercially.

37657. I do not know whether you were in the room when the last witness, Mr. Macroarty, was under examination?—I was.

37658. I do not know whether you heard me questioning him with regard to the ability and likelihood of an Irish body meeting any obligations which it undertook?—Yes, I did hear you.

37659. I did not ask whether an Irish authority or a State authority would be best. My question was—Looking at it in the light of practical experience, and speaking as a County Councillor, would you be prepared to say, so far as your opinion goes, and looking at it from the point of view which I tried to put to him, that there is nothing to lead one to suppose that that body or any other general body representative of the country, would act in any contrary spirit to that which had already been done by similar bodies?—I am quite sure of it.

37660. And they could be depended upon to fulfil their obligations if they gave them, in the same manner as the similar bodies up to the present have fulfilled theirs?—Yes, their undertakings would be faithfully carried out.

Examined by Mr. Acworth

37661. I gather you are in business yourself in the boot and shoe trade?—Yes.

37662. Are you a manufacturer?—Unfortunately not.

37663. You are a merchant?—Yes.

37664. And (I think I understood the point) that there is only a small difference between the through rate from, say, Leicester or Northampton or Kettering to Mullingar, and the local rate that is made up of the rate from, say, Leicester to Dublin and another rate on from Dublin to Mullingar?—Yes.

37665. And therefore you, getting a rebate of 10s on the local rate, which you do not get on the through rate, find it better to take the two local rates than the through rate?—Yes.

37666. That is what it comes to?—Yes.

37667. You do not send out of Ireland again at all, of course?—No.

37668. You bring in; all the stuff you distribute comes from England?—Yes.

37669. Is there no manufacture in Ireland?—There are some manufactures in Ireland.

37670. Where?—Some in Carlow, Cork, Belfast, Dublin, and Waterford.

37671. I suppose you buy from them?—From some.

37672. From Dublin you clearly get it a great deal cheaper; you get something like 10s. as against 4s.

The private
proprietary
system of
railways
renders any
general
reduction in
rates impos-
sible.

The national-
isation of the
railways
under an
Irish authority
suggested as
the best
means of
aiding the
development
of Irish
industries.

Proper con-
sideration to
be observed
of the Com-
panies' in-
terests in any
State pro-
posal scheme.

—the railway rate that you pay?—Yes, as against the English rate, you mean.

37993. Yes. Does that make much difference; does that give Dublin a serious advantage?—It does not give a serious advantage, because the English manufacturer produces for such a large market he can afford to classify his production; he can have his labour so trained that he has a very great advantage over any Irish manufacturer.

37994. He can make in three or four hundred sizes and shapes?—He can make in a few number of shapes—three or four—and find a market for it. For instance, he can have six lines, and his labour can be so trained that it would be—

37995. More productive?—Not more productive, but so trained that it will produce better and quicker than if that labour was more diversified and applied to more different articles.

37996. That gives him an advantage?—Undoubtedly.

37997a. The Irishman has got an advantage of 30s. a ton on the rate to Mullingar, but that, I suppose, on the percentage value of a ton of boots is very trifling?—Very trifling.

37997. Supposing the Irishman got his rate for nothing, which is the best we can suppose, or that the Englishman's was put up a little further, would it be easy to make a difference in the railway rate that would affect the trade?—It would undoubtedly be an encouragement and advantage which does not exist at present.

37998. You would like, as I understand, to get more than this 30s. advantage?—If possible.

37999. And I suppose you would say that for a high-class article like boots and shoes the difference in the rate would not make much difference, on things less valuable it would make more difference?—Undoubtedly.

38000. You would like to protect the Irish manufacturer, and give him a better chance of competing with the Englishman?—Exactly.

38001. That is for stuff coming into Ireland?—Yes.

38002. Stuff coming from England and Scotland to Ireland?—If it were possible, I would charge a higher rate.

38003. You do not, I suppose, export from Ireland into England?—No, but I think that if there was a Board of Control, such as I speak of, they should have the power of creating advantageous terms to ports for all Irish traffic, because it would create indirect traffic afterwards; then they would have labour employed in the country, those people will use food-stuffs and other materials, and that causes indirect traffic, whereas manufactured goods coming into the country do not create indirect traffic.

38004. What you want to do is to put up the Irish portion of the rates for stuff coming in from England and put down the rates for stuff going from Ireland?—Yes.

38005. Is that the view of your Council?—Yes.

38006. Do you think it is the common view in Ireland?—I believe it is a very general view.

38007. You will agree that it will not help the English manufacturer?—I do not know. I will not say it would not, inasmuch as you have a much larger population in England, and certain things are produced in England that could never be produced in Ireland, you would make people better off in Ireland, and consequently there would be a greater demand for those things which they could not produce.

38008. Necessarily, but it would not help the English manufacturer to have the rate put up against him?—It would affect him very immaterially.

38009. In your case?—I think generally it would affect him very immaterially.

Examined by Mr. SEYMOUR

38010. You consider that this is a question in which all Ireland has a common interest?—Entirely.

38011. The North as well as the South, and the East as well as the West?—Absolutely an interest.

38012. The establishment of a system of publicly-owned railways would, by the substitution of popular credit and by untied working instead of plural working, create a fund out of which reductions in rates and fares could be given?—Undoubtedly.

38013. That would be a fund which would benefit the whole of Ireland indifferently without laying on any part of Ireland any special burden?—Of course.

38014. As Ireland in the South and West has been hitherto neglected more than the North, and therefore is more undeveloped now than the East and the North, it would appear that any surplus due hereafter to development of traffic would be more likely to come from the South and West than from the North-East, and on the other hand, of any benefit the North would have its share?—Certainly, there would be no division at all, we should be all one.

38015. It might be possible to consider a business question of this kind without raising evil spirits?—I think they should be banished and forgotten, they should not exist at all.

38016. Do you agree with the general evidence here that the export trade of Ireland is greatly hindered by the excess of export rates from Ireland into England over those from foreign countries abroad into England?—Undoubtedly.

38017. You think a general reduction of such rates is required?—It is essential.

38018. As to the through rates from England and the Irish inland rates, do you agree with the evidence generally that the through rates from England are framed on a very low scale as compared with the inland rates in Ireland?—I do.

38019. Suppose there was an effort to establish or develop boot manufacture in different parts of Ireland, are not the import rates from England such as would make it more difficult for the Irish manufacturers to find markets in Ireland?—Will you just ask that question again, if you please.

38020. The import rates from England?—Yes, you mean from country towns.

38021. From the interior parts of England to the interior parts of Ireland. Do you not think that the inland rates from one Irish town to another would be found to prove severely upon an Irish boot manufacturer who wanted to sell his boots in Ireland?—No, I would not say that.

38022. In proportion to the services rendered?—I am talking of the general result on the trade.

38023. I want to take the proportion of services?—I have not the figure.

38024. But take the general question; take the proportion of services, the number of miles from the English town to the Irish town, and the rate charged for that service, and then take the number of miles from one Irish town to another, do you not think that in proportion to the services rendered by the railway company to the Irishman, the rate to him would be higher than the through rate?—Naturally.

38025. Is not the Irishman who takes boots placed at a disadvantage by having to pay a rate proportionately higher than is paid for the through transit?—There is a difference, but you have had such extreme evidence of the disparity of the rates that I really am not in a position to go into it.

38026. You are not in a position to say that the rates may not be so much higher in many cases as to create certain hindrances, say, to the Irish bootmaker trying to sell his boots in Ireland?—I am not in a position to go into these figures.

38027. Apart altogether from Protection—I put that aside as a question not within the sphere of this Commission, which is simply on the question of railway rates—do you not think, without raising any question of Protection, there could be such a reduction upon the export rates and inland rates in Ireland as would promote a great development of Irish industries?—It would be a very material help in the development of the country to have the rates made so low.

38028. You say that there should be no advantage given against Ireland?—I think it should be the other way about.

38029. But part from that question, is it not possible for the rates which are now against Ireland—the export rates to England—to be brought down to such a level as that there should be no advantage given to the Continental importer to Great Britain as against the Irish importer?—Certainly.

38030. Would not that be satisfactory if it were done?—We should be very glad to get it.

38031. It might be found sufficient?—It might; all things are possible.

38032. In the unification of the Irish railways do you consider, having regard to the nature of the grievances that the authority to settle the rates and fares should be an Irish authority?—Undoubtedly.

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. J. P. Downall, Representative of the Warrington County Council.

The anticipated savings from untied working would benefit Ireland as a whole.

The export trade from Ireland to English towns is hindered by the greater facilities enjoyed by foreign competitors.

Through rates from England framed on a very low scale as compared with Irish inland rates.

A general reduction in rates so important factors in reducing a material and development of Irish industries as a whole.

The possibility of reducing the export rates to England as so to prevent any advantage to Continental importer as to Great Britain.

An Irish authority constituted the proper body to secure a reform of existing transport grievances.

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. J. E. Dowdall, representing the Dublin County Council.

The extent of the Irish railways presents no difficulty to enable control.

Letters as to routes given to traders from certain Irish railways quoted by the Chairman.

37943. And that such authority should be able to provide that the profit resulting from the lines should be devoted to Irish goods?—Certainly. Let me add one of the reasons why the General Council of County Councils believe in the successful working of the railways by an Irish Board is the certain economy that would be effected in control. Take, as an example, for instance, the Great Western of England. Its capital is more than double of the combined Irish capital, its receipts about three times greater than the total Irish receipts, and it is controlled by a Board of seventeen Directors and eighteen principal officials as against the hundreds of Directors and principal officials controlling in Ireland.

37944-5. I am not aware that anyone raises the point that the extent of the Irish railways would make it difficult to manage them as one system?—No.

37946. Chairman.—Before we adjourn for luncheon may I mention, just for the information of the railway companies, that I have got in my hand some letters—I am not in a position at present to give

either the places, the dates, or the names of the parties, but I will just read you two or three extracts. One is "I am in the habit of getting several descriptions of traffic from Belfast"—I have put in the words "several descriptions" because it mentions the traffic, and I do not think it is policy at present to mention it—and both the Midland and Great Northern Companies send their agents competing for this traffic—I have here all the rates for these materials, varying from 8s. to 10s. a ton—and they give discount as well." That is an extract from one letter. Another letter is "Our rate, Belfast to Sligo, is 12s. 6d., of which we can allow you 10s. 4d. a ton." That is a communication from a railway company, and there is another communication from a railway company: "I am in receipt of your letter re charges, and I will agree to you stopping 6d. per ton discount off this lot." It is merely for the railway companies when considering their case to look into those questions. I have got the original letters here.

Sir GEORGE ST. JOHN COCHRANE, Bart., B.C., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Sir George St. John Cochrane, Bart., B.C., Vice-Chairman of the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway.

The Cork and Muskerry Railway—the length and date of construction.

Capital sanctioned, and percentage guaranteed.

Comparison of receipts and expenditure of the railway—years 1895-1896.

Industries benefited by the railway.

The time and fare alleged to be not satisfactory to the public.

37947. I have only a few questions to ask you, Sir George. First of all, you are appearing on behalf of the Cork and Muskerry Railway Company?—Yes.

37948. Are you the Chairman of that Company?—No; I am Vice-Chairman.

37949. What is the length of the line?—Eighteen miles.

37950. When was it constructed?—In 1886, I think, it was begun. It was under the Act of 1883.

37951. Under the Tramways (Ireland) Act of 1883?—Yes.

37952. And what was the amount of capital passed by the Grand Jury?—£75,800.

37953. What was the amount of capital sanctioned by the Privy Council?—£75,000.

37954. And the percentage?—5 per cent.

37955. What were the receipts of the line in 1886, that is the first year after it was opened?—The receipts were £7,456.

37956. And the expenditure for that year?—£3,912.

37957. Now, take the last year for which you have the figures, 1896. What were the receipts in that year?—£9,693.

37958. And the expenditure?—£7,603.

37959. What was the increase in the receipts?—£2,147.

37960. And the increase in expenditure?—£1,693.

37961. Of course, the railway has been of great advantage to the district?—A very great advantage to the district.

37962. I suppose there are fairs there?—Yes, there are a two days' fair each month at Coachford, and one each month at Donoughmore.

37963. Have you any industries in the district?—Yes, there is a large brewery at Coachford, and another at Claghoe.

37964. Is there any manufacturing industry?—There are large woollen mills at Blarney, and there are large woollen mills at Dringey which are doing very well.

37965. All these particular industries have been considerably benefited by the construction of this railway?—They have, yes.

37966. And the rates charged are such as the parties interested consider satisfactory?—I think so, as far as we know; we have had no complaints about them.

37967. And if there were not satisfactory you would have had complaints?—We should.

37968. What are the fares? You have only two classes I think—first and third?—First and third, and the fares are—

37969. Say, from Cork to Coachford?—From Cork to Coachford, first-class 1s. 6d., and third-class, 1s. 1d.

37970. What is the distance?—From Cork to Coachford it is fifteen miles.

37971. So that the third-class fare is less than a penny a mile?—It is less than a penny per mile; it is just over a halfpenny. The third-class return fare to Coachford is 2s. 6d., and the distance would be thirty miles, so that it works out at just over a halfpenny per mile.

37972. Therefore, there are low passenger fares?—Yes.

37973. And a reasonable rate for goods traffic?—I think so.

37974. And such rates and fares have been a great encouragement to the district?—I think so.

37975. I do not think I need ask you about the train mileage. I suppose all your capital is spent?—Yes.

37976. You have no available capital?—No, not at all.

37977. But you have on this railway, I suppose, almost necessary improvements which would be a great advantage to the district if you had the capital to carry them out?—Yes.

37978. But you have not got the capital?—We have not got it, and we have no means of getting it.

37979. Have you considered what amount of capital would be required to give these almost necessary facilities which you consider would be a great advantage to the district?—Yes, we have; about 26,700 would be required.

37980. Let us put it this way: you think that between 26,000 and 27,000 additional capital spent on this railway would be of great advantage not only to the railway but to the district which it serves?—Certainly.

37981. And that these additions are practically necessary?—Yes.

37982. And you would be only too glad to carry them out if you had the money?—Yes.

37983. Have you applied to any public department in connection with the matter?—No.

37984. You have not, this is the last application?—Yes.

37985. When I say "last application" I mean that this is the last time you have suggested publicly that the amount could be advantageously spent?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. SEXTON.

37986. Do you consider that the growth of receipts is likely to be progressive?—I think it is, I have got the returns written out, as you see, in great detail. In the last half-year we got £1,300 odd to the credit of the balance out of a total of £1,875 that had to be paid. That works out at £580 odd, half paid by the ratepayers and half paid by the Treasury—it works out at a little under 1½d. in the pound.

37987. The expenditure has increased a good deal since the first year, but the receipts have been still more expensive?—Yes.

37988. And you think that probably the surplus will continue to increase. What is the actual charge at present on the district?—Roughly speaking, about 3d. in the pound.

37989. Expressed in money, how much?—About £250 to £300.

37960. So that a small expansion of net receipts would lose the district from the levy?—I think it would eventually.

37961. Do you think that this suggested expenditure would contribute towards that end?—I do.

37962. The first-class fares are very low; they are only slightly over a penny a mile?—They are.

37963. And the third-class fares are very near the level of the first class. A possibility of your fares is that your third-class fares are very little over a penny per mile, while the third-class fares are much more near the level of the first-class than is generally the case?—I think we run them so low as we could. There are a great many people who, if we had kept the first-class fares too high, would have gone third.

37964. You think your third-class fare is more suitable than one of a penny a mile?—I do.

37965. Do you think that an even lower third-class rate would suit the means of the mass of the population better and might develop traffic?—I do not think that. I think we get all the traffic we can out of it in the district.

37966. I daresay you know that the average numbered railway journeys as passengers per head of the population in Ireland is only six or seven in the year as against four times the number per head of the population in England; so that there is room for development?—There is, but I think that we get nearly every bit of traffic we could get out of it.

37967. In that district?—Yes. Of course, we have special fares on market days and Saturdays, which bring it even lower.

37968. Since you started you have doubled the original number of locomotives?—Yes.

37969. And you have quadrupled the number of carriages and doubled the number of wagons?—Yes.

37970. I suppose one may say that expenditure on that scale for those purposes will not be requisite in the future?—No, I think not.

37971. That is another reason for thinking that if you could make this suggested expenditure you might be able to turn the line into a commercially self-supporting line?—I think so.

37972. Do you consider the present system or lack of system of dealing with these financial matters ought to continue; I mean that lines like yours, or districts requiring new lines, should be left to find for themselves, and go to the Treasury, and so on. Do you not think there should be some systematic method, by which resources might be put into a common fund, and the public interests served without local levies, would not such a method greatly tend to perfect the transit system in Ireland?—It might; but after all, I think it is far that the districts should pay something for the advantages of railway communication. I believe the ratepayers have to pay has been repaid to every farmer three times over.

37973. No doubt it may have been so; but, speaking generally, looking to the interest and development of the country as a whole, do you not consider that a system whereby the whole burden of a local line is thrown upon a particular district, sometimes very oppressively, might be usefully modified?—It might be; but, after all, the Treasury contributes 2 per cent towards it.

37974. Have you not observed that recently that system appears to have been given up, and that now we can look practically only to the Irish Development Fund, which we understand has been exhausted by the operations of the Land Purchase Act?—Yes.

37975. So that the future appears to be rather dubious and uncertain. Might it not be well that we should settle what resources are really available for this purpose in Ireland, and put them in the hands of some authority which would deal with the whole subject from the point of view of the general public interest, and avoid making a contribution of the full levy by the particular district an indispensable condition?—Certainly it would be an advantage to open out the country; but there are very few places that I know of that are not thoroughly supplied with railway communication now. I think we want a little more after Mr. Ballless's Act was passed, and more railways were made than could possibly pay.

37976. I admit that you in Cork did a great deal; but we have had strong evidence of the want of something like 100 lines in various parts of the coun-

try. You see no harm, and possibly good, in a more systematic method of dealing with these matters?—Not at all.

Examined by Mr. ACORN.

38007. Does this additional rolling stock include stock which had to be got to work the Donaghmore Extension?—No. We got 23,000 worth of stock from them which is not included in that. We got an engine—

38008. You need not trouble about the details. I accept it in the way you have given it. Is the Donaghmore Extension stocked enough by itself, or have you, in working, to supplement it from your resources?—They work in and out between us. Of course, there are certain times when it might be thought enough; there are other times when it is not, and it is worked in and out.

38009. The point I wanted to get at was whether this increase in rolling stock was only for your own line, or whether any portion of it was either for general use or for reserve use for the Donaghmore Extension?—I do not think so. I think it was really for our own line.

38010. I see that your expenditure has gone up roughly speaking, from £5,000 to £7,500?—Yes.

38011. Does that last year include any further expenditure on what ought to be capital purposes?—Yes; that last year includes about £500 or £600, I think, for payment for rolling stock.

38012. Could you, by chance, tell me whether the £5,910 in the year 1899 was all income expenditure?—There was some in it, but I could not tell you how much at this moment; I could tell you when I get the return.

38013. Practically every year from 1889 includes capital expenditure, does it?—Yes.

38014. Of a varying amount?—Yes.

38015. So that we must not talk too much of the increase of working expenses, because it is not really comparing like with like?—No.

38016. Then with regard to goods rates, Cork to Coachford. I wonder if you can tell me why your rates for the high-class goods are so very low; they seem to be very low having regard to the cost. Was there any special policy, do you know?—I do not think so.

38017. 5s 6d for a ton of furniture for fifteen miles is very cheap?—I could not tell you why it is.

38018. And 2s for a ton of coal for fifteen miles is fairly good. I am not ungenerous; I only want to understand?—I am afraid I could not explain it. They probably made the rates as low as they could in the interests of the ratepayers.

38019. My point is that in proportion the rate for the higher class stuff is very much lower than that for the lower class?—I could not tell you why.

38020. We shall agree that 5s 6d for a ton of furniture—that is the highest—is much less proportionately than 2s a ton for coal?—Yes. But I do not fancy that many tons of furniture would be carried in that district.

38021. I think that that is probably the explanation. In your abstract of evidence you say that you want a suitable stone-crushing plant which would cost £1,500?—We say that, but that is really a matter that I do not attach so much importance to as some people do. We have a good gravel bank there which I do not think is properly worked at present. I would not be in favour of the expenditure myself.

38022. You do not want one and the Donaghmore people another?—No, certainly not.

38023. Because they also have put in an estimate for one?—Yes.

38024. Anyway, we may strike out one of those £1,500's?—One would do for both.

38025. And you are inclined to doubt whether you want the one?—The money could be expended there usefully in other ways.

38026. I do not know whether you want to say anything on the general question; you have not mentioned it in your abstract of evidence. Have you any general view?—There is something you have not asked me about. One of the reasons why I think we are entitled to ask for a contribution is that our original capital sanctioned was £78,000, but it was cut down by the Privy Council on the ground that we had put in much more rolling-stock than we wanted. They stated us with this ridiculous amount of rolling-stock, and we could not work the line at

Nov. 15, 1897.

Mr. George St. John Colman, Bart., Esq., Vice-Chairman of the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway.

A more systematic method of dealing with railway extensions, etc., than the present arrangement recommended.

The Donaghmore Extension more extensively equipped with rolling stock for its own needs.

The additional rolling stock obtained, required mainly for the Cork and Muskerry Railway.

Items of capital expenditure included in each year's accounts or charged to reserves.

The goods rates on the Muskerry line very low.

Items of additional equipment required for the Muskerry Railway.

The effect of the action of the Privy Council in cutting down the original capital sanctioned for the Muskerry line.

Nov. 11, 1907.

Mr. George St. John Goldsworty, Bart., B.A., Vice-Chairman of the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway.

The Bill for the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway Bill appeared in Parliament.

Consequent measures Parliament expenses.

all; we had to go to the Court of Queen's Bench to get a writ to allow us to buy rolling-stock out of revenue. The next reason why I think we are entitled to some consideration is the extra cost to which we were put in getting our Bill. We were in the unique position of being the only Light Railway Bill in Ireland that was opposed in Parliament. It was the first year after the Act was passed, and the Attorney for the Irish Office declared that we were bound to go before a Committee. Lord Bledisloe unfortunately agreed, and we were sent before a Committee of the House of Lords. Consequently we had to go through the same expense as a Private Bill. We had to go before a Committee, bring over witnesses, employ counsel and Parliamentary agents, and then they threw us out.

38027. Although you were unopposed?—No; we were opposed. But we had objected all along that they had no right to send us before a Committee, that it was a Government measure. Lord FitzGerald and Lord Selborne took the case up in the House of Lords and brought up the point that what had been done by the Chairman of Committees was perfectly illegal, and after a debate in which they were backed up by every law lord in the House, the matter was wound up by Lord Halsbury getting up and stating that a grave injustice would be done if the House of Lords did not upset the motion sending the Bill to a Committee. By that time it was very late in the Session. We had already had to spend about £200 or £1,000 in fighting the Bill. We went down to the House of Commons, but, being opposed there, it could not be got through that year. That put us to an expense of at least £1,200.

38028. And in the following year?—It was run through.

38029. Not as a private Bill?—No, as a Government Bill. The purpose of the Act was that, first of all, the schemes should be inquired into by the Grand Jury and then by the Privy Council, and that then, the matter having been decided by those local tribunals, the local people should be relieved of all expenditure. Instead of that we were put to exactly the same expense as if we had gone for a private Bill. That, I maintain, had to come out of our capital.

38030. It is very interesting that you should have told us that, because previous witnesses have told us what I thought was a mistake, that all these Bills have to run the gauntlet of both Houses of Parliament just as any other Railway Bill would?—They have to run the gauntlet of both Houses of Parliament, but they are Government measures, and all the costs have to be borne by the Government.

38031. Mr. Scroth—Your grievance was made manifest by the circumstance that a public Bill passed the next year?—It was made manifest by the debate in the House.

38032. And in addition there was the palpable circumstance that a public Bill passed the following year?—Yes.

Mr. Shanahan (the Secretary).—But these Bills do not go to Parliament unless the schemes are opposed before the Privy Council. If there is no opposition before the Privy Council in Ireland a Bill is not brought across to the Imperial Parliament.

Mr. Awerth.—Then the Privy Council sanctions it?

The Secretary.—Yes.

38033. Mr. Awerth.—And if it is opposed?—The Secretary.—The Burton Port line built by the Board of Works, was opposed before the Privy Council by the Douglas Company, and the provisional order had to be confirmed by Parliament.

38034. Mr. Scroth (to Mr. Awerth).—What became of the opposition to your line when the public Bill was introduced?—I think the Bill ran through. I think a resolution went over to the Irish Party.

Mr. Awerth.—I do not quite understand. If it was a provisional order the people who promoted the provisional order would be responsible for the expenditure on fighting the opposition.

The Secretary.—I think it is usually treated as unopposed.

Mr. Awerth.—The provisional order is introduced as a Government Bill; but if it is opposed?—

The Secretary.—Paradox me; under the Act of 1896, it is the promoters of the line—who must be an existing railway company within the terms of

the Act of Parliament—who are the promoters of the order, not the Government Department who are providing the money for its construction.

Mr. Awerth.—Supposing the Board of Trade or the Local Government Board in England, or anybody else, accept a scheme and they promote a provisional order; if the provisional order is opposed it can go before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, and the costs of the fighting have to be borne by the promoters of the provisional order, not by the Government.

The Secretary.—Certainly.

38035. Mr. Awerth (to Mr. Scroth).—Do you care to express any view on the general question referred to?—What do you call the general question?

38036. Whether anything ought to be done, and if so, what, to make the railways more useful to the country; take that as the broad reference. You do not say anything about it in your abstract of evidence, but one knows that you are a representative Irishman, and if you wish to express any views I would like to hear them?—Personally, I do not believe that now, whatever might have been the case fifty years ago—I believe that if the Government had then, before the railways were made, taken the question up and made them, it would have been a good thing, but I do not believe that any good would come from the Government's now taking them up or from what they call nationalising the railways. But I certainly think that if many of the smaller railways could be amalgamated it would be a great benefit. Personally, I think the greatest benefit we get is the competition that is now going on between the English companies for our business. For instance, the Great Western fight the North Western for the business in the southern part of the country, and the Midland, having bought the Northern Counties in Ireland, are fighting the Lancashire and Yorkshire, I suppose, for their business in that part of the country. What we want is really competition.

38037. I will not go into the general question more than to ask you this.—Imagine a central board in Dublin controlling all the Irish railways; do you think it would be easy for that board to deal with the conflicting claims of the South and West, and Great Western and the North Western, and the rest of them?—Personally I should oppose altogether the centralising of the Board in Dublin, because the main idea of the people in Dublin is to get everything up there. I do not care what department of life it may be, whether it is sport or business, or trade or whatever it may be, if you put the Board in Dublin their one idea is to get everything there, and to run the show; they look upon Dublin as the centre of the universe.

38038. Mr. Scroth.—But if it were an elected body representing the country, Dublin would have but a small minority on the Board?—That might be, but whenever you get a Board of any sort in Dublin their one idea is to get everything up to them.

38039. But surely the members elected by the different parts of the country would be controlled by their constituents?—They might be, but personally I do not think it; I may be wrong.

38040. Mr. Awerth.—Readily, subject to the absorption of the little railways that have no competitive value, and are too small to work themselves satisfactorily, you would like to leave the present position of things?—I would.

38041. Do you think that Irish railways are, under present circumstances, improving?—I think they are.

38042. Steadily?—They are certainly giving much more facilities than they did.

38043. I was not speaking from the shareholders' point of view, but from the point of view of the public?—I think they are.

38044. The service to the public is improving?—Certainly.

38045. As quickly as you could reasonably expect?—I think it is improving.

Examined by Mr. ABERNETHY.

38046. That 2s. rate for coal includes the use of your wagons, does it not?—How do you mean?

38047. You know that in England coal is carried almost entirely in colliery companies' wagons, but the coal on your railway would be carried in your own wagons, would it not?—Yes, entirely.

38048 So that the charge includes some figures for the use of your wagons?—Yes.

38049 It would differ from the English rate to that extent?—Yes.

38050 In asking for £6,700 to make certain improvements upon your lines, I note that you ask for £2,000, nearly one-third of the whole, for improving certain curves. Are these curves very bad?—They are bad, particularly in one case, at Myshall, and there is a case which I have not included in my proof, possibly I ought to have done, which is about five miles from Cork, where the original line was laid to go across the river twice and to go dead straight, but, on account of wet capital having been cut down by the Board of Works and of the extra expenditure that we were put to, the engineer suggested that, to save money, he should avoid the two bridges and make a loop. That was really a great pity.

38051 Would it improve the curve?—It would have cost a great deal to do so; you would have to make two bridges across the river to make the line straight.

38052 What is the radius?—5½ chains, various curves, two of them.

38053 Is there any risk to your trains at present on account of them?—No, we only run twelve miles an hour on them, but the cost is considerable; the wheels and the rails and sleepers on those curves have to be constantly renewed.

Examined by Colonel HERCULES FAY.

38054 I gather that a great deal of the expense which you have incurred, and which has raised your working expenditure, has been due to the absence of sufficient rolling stock in the first instance, and also to the line not having been constructed, perhaps, as efficiently as it might have been?—The cost of the rolling stock; but, as far as the line is concerned, except possibly one of those curves, there is very little to complain of.

38055 With regard to the rolling stock for the last two years, 1905 and 1906, you have paid £1,000 in 1905, and £570 in 1906?—Yes.

38056 That is, roughly speaking, 2000 for each of those years?—Yes.

38057 Was that abnormal expenditure, or would it recur?—It is nearly cleared now, but it has been going on steadily for several years.

38058 But see that the balance would have been clear from any payments?—The payments would have been very little. The cost of the improvements really is £15,480 spent out of revenue.

38059 One of your reasons for thinking that you ought now to have some relief from the Government is that the original estimate was cut down at the instance of the Board of Works, and that if it had not been for their intervention and also the cost to which you were put in passing your Bill through Parliament, you would have been in a very different position from what you are in to-day?—I think we should have been.

38060 Then with regard to fares. Your passenger fares and goods rates undoubtedly compare very favourably with those of which we have had evidence with regard to other railways. Would you go so far as to say that even though those fares are low, they have resulted in a considerable expansion of traffic?—They have, but the principle we went on was that as the people were paying their contribution we ought to make the rates and fares as low as we possibly could.

38061 While you carried only 11,000 tons of goods in 1905, in 1906 you carried 14,000 tons, an increase of 3,000 tons in the one year?—Yes.

38062 And I gather that traffic has been steadily increasing, showing that in spite of the low fares a large expansion of traffic has taken place which has justified those fares?—Yes.

38063 With your knowledge of Irish railways, and with the experience which has resulted in your own case, would you go so far as to say that a reduction, possibly not to so great an extent, but a reduction in rates and charges in the case of other lines would in their case also be recouped by an expansion of traffic?—I think it is a question for the individual railways, but they might develop their traffic if they can afford to lower their fares. But it is a question for them to consider; they have not the volume of traffic that they have in England.

38064 I do not suppose that you are more favourably situated than many other lines, and your experience has shown that a reduction of fares does not necessarily mean a reduction of income. What I wanted to know was whether, with your knowledge of Ireland generally, and with that experience in your own case, you are not of opinion that if other railways saw their way to make corresponding reductions they also would derive, as you have done, an increase of traffic and increased profits?—I think the lower they can make their fares consistently with their interests the better. May I make one comment on some previous proceedings? In the examination of the Rev. P. Glynn, Mr. Balfour Browne made this statement:—"Do you know that leaving out those expenses, the Caran and Leitrim expenses are £207 per mile per annum; the Clagher Valley, £223 per mile per annum; the Cork and Muskerry, £268 per mile per annum; the Tralee and Dingle, managed by this Committee, £269 per mile per annum; and the West and South Clare line, £276 per mile per annum?" Obviously, from a statement like that, it would seem that our line was the most expensively worked in Ireland; but it is a most unfair inference. The proper way to do it is to take it per train mile. We have a line of eighteen miles long, and of course if you take the total amount spent on running those miles it seems very high, but the fair way to take it is per train mile, and we run a great many more. I was so struck with this just before going to the half-yearly meeting that I got our Secretary to work it out, and this is the result. The Caran and Leitrim, which, according to Mr. Balfour Browne, is lower than ours, works out at 2s. 1d.; the West Clare, 2s. 2d., one-half year, and 2s. 10d. another; the South Clare, 2s. 4d.; the Tralee and Dingle, 2s. 1d.; and we work out in two years, 1905 and 1906, at 1s. 8d., and the Clagher Valley works out at about the same. Included in that is about £1,100 for rolling stock.

38065 Mr. Awerth.—Then to turn it the other way round, in fairness to the other people now, you must admit that the larger your train mileage the less ought to be your expense per train mile, because a large part of the expenditure is more or less constant.—Quite so; but take the case of the Caran and Leitrim Railway. They run 100,000 train miles, and it works out at 2s. 1½d., whereas we run 91,000 train miles, and it works out at 1s. 8d.

38066 If you take it at train miles run, if a railway is working only three trains a day and you are working five, one would naturally expect that your train mileage cost would be less than theirs.—Of course.

38067 Because your permanent way expenditure is spread over five trains instead of three?—Quite so; but it is not the fair way to take the cost, as was done in the other case.

Mr. Awerth.—Quite so; but do not let us have anybody else coming here and saying that you have been unfair to them.

38068 Colonel Hercules Fay.—You spoke in favour of the small lines being amalgamated. We have had a good deal of evidence with regard to the desirability of the Cork and Brandon Railway taking up those nine or ten subsidiary branches; if that were carried out that would include your company?—Hardly, because we run separately altogether. I do not know how we could get into the Cork and Brandon system. But it was a great misfortune that when those various lines were passed—the Skull and Scillabreen, and so on—they did not insist upon the Cork and Brandon Railway working them.

38069 What I wanted to ask was, would your Company make any objection, provided the terms were fair, to being taken over by the Cork and Brandon Railway; but I gather that you do not think it would be feasible?—I do not think it would be feasible. The river has between us; we are geographically two miles from a Cork and Brandon station. Their line does not run anywhere near us.

38070 The Cork and Muskerry?—The Cork and Muskerry does not run anywhere near the Cork and Brandon.

38071 But with the exception of that line?—I think it would be better that all the lines which branch off the Cork and Brandon line should be worked by that Company.

38072 How about the Cork and Maunston?—They run within a few yards.

Nov. 15, 1907

Mr. George de John Colman, Barr., 21, Vice-Chancellor of the Court and Master of the High Court.

The cost of the working of other light railway systems in Ireland compared with that of the Cork and Muskerry Railway.

Inconclusive evidence on the point given by a previous witness.

Comparison of train mileage cost suggested as the most equitable.

Suggested absorption of all the South Cork Railway companies into the Cork, Brandon and South Coast Railway by that system.

Isolated position of the Muskerry line with respect to other railways in Cork.

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. George
St. John
Colleston,
Barr., &c.,
Vice-Chairman
of the Cork
and Muskerry
Light Rail-
way.

The Irish
railway acts
as a whole
regarded as
satisfactory.

The proposal
for nationalisation
of Irish rail-
ways should
receive careful
consideration.

Mr. Timothy
J. Conry, M.P.,
Representative
of the Cork County
Council.

The heavy
Parliamentary
expenses at-
tended in
connection
with important
works in
Ireland.

The scheme
for the Lee
Bridge is Cork.

Suggestion
that the Cork,
Bandon and
South Coast
Railway Com-
pany should
work all the
Cork railways
south of the
river Lee.

38073. *Mr. H. Jephell*.—There is no physical connection; the new junction scheme does not touch you?—No.

38074. *Mr. Serle*.—Do you agree that a reduction of export rates which would put the Irish producer on a level with the foreign exporter into Great Britain, and a reduction of inland rates, which would put the Irish manufacturer on an equal footing with the British exporter into Ireland, would be a great advantage?—Of course, the lower you can reduce the export rates the better, but I think they treat us very well at the present moment.

38075. But if you compare the export rates out of Ireland with import rates into Great Britain from abroad, the trend of evidence is that the Irish exporter is at a disadvantage; and similarly the Irish manufacturer, by reason of the very low import duties into Ireland, finds himself hindered in the development of manufactures?—Yes, but the general public get the advantage.

38076. The public get the benefit of the import rates; but if the inland rates were lowered, so as to enable the Irish manufacturer to supply at the same price, the public would be in no worse position, and the Irish manufacturer would be in a better position?—Yes.

38077. Supposing public ownership and united working of the Irish lines would provide means whereby the present transport system might be perfected, and whereby Irish industries and trade might be de-

veloped, do you not think that in view of such a prospect a proposal for unifying the lines should receive careful consideration on that ground?—Every proposal brought forward ought to receive careful consideration.

38078. You think it is worthy of consideration, and that it should not be pre-judged?—I do not think anything should be judged in advance; but, personally, I do not believe in it.

38079. But you would not decide finally in favour of private management if it appeared there was a case for thinking that the development of trade and industry in Ireland might be powerfully aided by a unified public system?—I should like to hear the evidence in favour of it first. I do not think that my neighbour, when giving evidence on the Donoughmore line explained the manner in which we work it, because I gathered from the paper that some questions were asked as to how we treated them, and he said they had no complaint. I only wish to point out that we work it at actual cost; the bookings and things are worked out; the carriage and mileage proportions were carefully worked out by Mr. Shanahan, your secretary, acting for the Board of Works, who represent the Treasury, and our manager. So that if anybody should raise the question about the Donoughmore line which we work, it is worked on absolutely fair proportions.

The Secretary.—That is perfectly true; I can verify that.

Mr. TIMOTHY J. CONRY, M.P., examined by Sir HERBERT JESTICE (in the Chair).

38080. *Mr. Conry*, you are a Justice of the Peace?—Yes.

38081. And a County Councillor?—Yes.

38082. Are you on the County Council of Cork County?—Yes.

38083. I think you wish to give some evidence as to the cost of making railways in Ireland. Do you confine your evidence to railways in your own district, or does it apply to Ireland generally?—I prefer to confine myself to my own district.

38084. Will you give some instances?—The last instance in the bridge across the Lee. The Cork County Council, the City of Cork Council, and the Cork Harbour Board, were all in favour of that, and the Great Western Railway Company of England were to supply the money. In spite of all that they had to come across to England at very considerable cost to get permission to make a bridge across the Lee.

38085. Has the bridge now been made?—No; they are just acquiring the land at present.

38086. Then they got the powers?—Yes, the Act of Parliament is passed. But here were these three bodies, with a combined income amounting to about half a million of money a year, all agreeing to this scheme, and I think they should have had power to make this bridge themselves without asking permission of Parliament to do it.

38087. You think they should have been able to do it without obtaining an Act of Parliament?—Without requiring an Act of Parliament.

38088. I think the general experience is that all large works require statutory powers to enable the scheme to be carried out, and a great many different interests have to be consulted?—The interests are purely local.

38089. Were there no opponents?—No, except the three schemes.

38090. Have you anything else to say on that?—Not on that. I think the Cork and Bandon Company ought to work and manage all the railways south of the Lee.

38091. You would be in favour of amalgamating all these railways with the Cork and Bandon Company?—Yes, including the Donoughmore line.

38092. Which has no physical connection?—At present. There is about one and a quarter miles between them and the Marazion line, and if the Marazion line were linked up—there is only about thirty-six feet between it and the Cork and Bandon line—the people in the Blarney district could go direct into the Cork and Bandon station, and go direct to any part of Ireland.

38093. You draw attention in your abstract of evidence to the management expenses of the different branches connected with the Cork and Bandon line?—Yes.

The management expenses come to about £1,000 a year.

38094. I think your argument is that that could be saved if these lines were amalgamated?—A great part of it could.

38095. Are you of opinion that a tribunal should be established in Ireland with power to settle disputes between railway companies and traders?—I think so, one that would be more "convenient" than the present.

38096. Instead of the Railway and Canal Commission?—Yes.

38097. Have you thought out what the nature of that tribunal should be, and what powers it should have?—I think the county court judge at quarter sessions should in the first instance have power to deal with these matters, and from him I would give an appeal to assessors, the two judges at assizes to decide the matter.

38098. Do you not think that in a dispute with a railway company, the railway company would carry the case through all the courts up to the highest, in which case there would be large expense?—Practically there is only one appeal from the quarter sessions, so I am told, and that is to the King's Bench.

38099. You know that the great expense of all these legal proceedings is the fees of counsel?—Yes, I believe so.

38100. Which would be the same whatever the court was?—I do not know that the local fees are as heavy as those in Dublin.

38101. Then you have something to say about the distribution of dividends?—Yes. In the present state of the law the County Council sends one paying order for the total amount of the guaranteed interest each half year to each company. The companies do not get a penny towards the cost of distributing the dividends, or to pay for a secretary, or for offices, and consequently they have to make a deduction from each shareholder to meet these expenses. On the Ballinacorney, Trillick, and Courmasherry Light Railway it costs us about £25 a year to do this, and the cost is evenly distributed amongst the shareholders.

38102. What about taxation; is it higher or lower than it was in the time of the Grand Jury?—It is lower.

38103. Do you attribute that to the more efficient working of the County Council?—I do.

38104. You think that the establishment of County Councils in the place of the Grand Juries has generally been an advantage?—It has been in Cork, at all events.

38105. On the general question, are you in favour of the nationalisation of the Irish railways?—I am.

38106. What sort of control would you like to see established over them?—It would depend on who was to supply the money. If it is to be charged on the Irish rates and the Irish people are to be responsible for it, I would give the management to the Irish people themselves.

38107. You think that there would be no difficulty in raising the necessary money on Irish credit?—That is rather a big question, but there ought not to be. The Ballinacorney, Tullamore, and Court-mahoney Light Railway 25 shares, for instance, are now standing at 54 or 65.

38108. But that is a small affair compared with the great railway system of Ireland, is it not?—It is.

38109. You do not wish to come to the Treasury or the Imperial Government, and ask them for money, you would rather raise it in Ireland?—I would raise it in Ireland if I could. I do not know whether the Irish people would subscribe it or not, but if the railways were under one management in Dublin the expense of running them would be less, and if they have been able to pay 34 per cent. for the last ten years they ought to be able to pay more if they were under one management.

38110. You are distinctly in favour of an Irish authority managing the lines?—If it is charged on Irish rates.

38111. But if the money was raised on the credit of the Imperial Government the control should be with the Imperial Government?—I think Irishmen should have something to say to it.

Examined by Mr. SKEW.

38112. You are here, I believe, as the representative of the County Council of Cork?—Yes.

38113. Is it very important for the welfare of Ireland that the export rates from Ireland should be reduced so as to put the Irish exporter on a level with the Continental exporter to England?—Certainly.

38114. Is it also important from another point of view that the inland rates should be put upon a fairer level with the import rates from England, so that the Irish manufacturer may have a chance?—Oh, he is handicapped at present.

38115. That being so important, in fact vital, would it not be very material that the authority having the control of the Irish lines should be an Irish authority if they were to settle what the rates should be in future?—They should have a predominant vote.

38116. And also, as the profits from year to year hereafter should be available for the further reduction of rates and for Irish public benefit, they should be administered by an Irish authority?—I think that that would be the best solution of the question.

38117. You said something about the sort of control being dependent on who supplied the money. Suppose it were arranged that the Treasury should lend to an Irish authority the money necessary to pay off such shareholders as might not be willing to accept the stock of the united Irish lines, and that the Irish authority gave the security of the Irish railway revenue and the security of the rates and of any other resources at their disposal, and that such security was accepted as satisfactory, should not the lines then be vested in the Irish authority as the owner?—Certainly.

38118. Unless the lines are vested in an Irish authority, Ireland will have no security that the proper reductions will be made in the rates or that the profits from the lines will be available for Irish purposes?—If the English had control some of the money would go to England for all we know.

38119. If the Imperial Government owned the lines a hard-up Chancellor of the Exchequer might seize the profits on the Irish lines for British use?—Yes.

38120. Do you think it would be indispensable for the protection of Ireland that the authority should be an Irish authority, owning and administering the lines?—It ought to be.

38121. You have spoken of the cost entailed by having to come to London to get the construction of

the bridge over the Lee at Cork legalised or sanctioned. I gather from what you said that you think Ireland suffers a good deal of loss through having to come to London to transact these details of local business?—I have no experience except that of the Cork line.

38122. You have found that experience quite enough to convince you that the method is a bad one?—That is a bad one.

38123. And you think that any Irish authority having control of the Irish lines ought to have power to sanction lines and works?—I think so.

38124. Assuming financial responsibility?—Certainly. It is an extraordinary thing that two or three gentlemen on a House of Commons Committee, who perhaps never saw Cork, and who would not take the same interest in the matter as Cork people, should have the power of saying whether or not a line should be made.

38125. The Irish people, generally, are of opinion that their business would be better done in Ireland than in England?—My own part, at any rate.

38126. And as the whole is greater than the part, so that if it is desirable that the whole should be done in Ireland it would be desirable that this part should be done in Ireland?—That part would be better done in Ireland than in England.

38127. Do you consider that a good deal of the cost of Irish railways and a good deal of their capital of £40,000,000 sterling, due to the fact that from the beginning people have had to come to London for the passing of every Irish Railway Act, and that the tendency has been to raise all expenditure—for Parliamentary costs and so forth—up to the British level?—Here is an instance. There are, roughly, 60 miles of railway between Cork and Skibbereen, and it took ten Acts of Parliament to construct that much of line.

38128. How many miles?—From 50 to 60.

38129. An average of only six miles per Act of Parliament?—Yes. There are 64 miles altogether.

38130. Now, consider for a moment, for the last 60 years everybody concerned has had to come to London and run the gamut of the two Houses and two Commissions to get an Act to construct a piece of railway, and the effect has been to impose upon Ireland the British scale of Parliamentary council's fees and other Parliamentary expenditure. Would you say that the consequence must have been that a very large proportion of the £40,000,000 capital was raised to defray such expenditure?—A great deal of it must have been.

38131. Do you not consider that this fact imposes upon the Imperial Legislature a special responsibility to make some reforms in the system of Irish railways appropriate to the needs of Ireland?—Yes.

38132. And to relieve, as far as possible, the effect of the pressure of that large capital?—I believe so.

38133. It is because the capital is so large that the companies say they cannot make any reduction in the rates; and you say the capital is so large because of expenses incurred in London?—A great part of it may be traced to that.

38134. It is suggested here that there is something useful to the public in competition between the present Irish railways. Is there any competition in rates? Does one company offer to do any service for a lower sum than another?—I have no experience except in Cork, and there is no competition there.

38135. There may be competition in facilities; they struggle with each other for fragments of traffic, but that, while it means more expense in the working of the lines, does little benefit to the public?—There is no competition; we have only one company in my part of the world.

38136. If there are three or four companies struggling to get the same traffic for conveyance by their several routes, what benefit does that do to the public, if the rates are not lowered? Suppose they agree upon a rate, and then struggle which route shall have the traffic, what benefit is that to the public?—I do not think they get very much of it. Shall I give an instance of the effect of reducing rates? During the two years of the Cork Exhibition the Cork and Brandon Railway Company gave very low rates indeed. If twenty people went up to the station-master in Connally while the Exhibition was on and paid 1s. 6d. each, these twenty people could get 3rd class tickets to Cork for a total of 30s., the usual price being 42s. That system prevailed over the whole of the Cork and

Nos. 15, 1667.

Mr. Timothy J. Casey, J.P., Representative of the Cork County Council.

The present arrangement as to Parliamentary sanction for railways, etc., condemned as bad.

The capital of the Irish railways greatly reduced by heavy Parliamentary expenses in promotion.

Ten Acts of Parliament obtained for the sixty miles between Cork and Skibbereen.

A special duty resting with the Imperial Legislature to reform the Irish railways in view of the pressure of their large capital.

The present competition between the railway companies of no real benefit to the public.

The good financial result of a temporary reduction of fares on the Cork and Brandon line.

Nov. 15, 1907.

Mr. Timothy J. Costello, J.P., Representative of the Cork County Council.

The necessity for a side station reduction in passenger fares in Ireland if traffic is to be fully developed.

The reduction of railway fares to passengers is important in this direction.

The probability of greater benefits arising from a side station control than from the present system of competition.

Bandon Railway for the two years the Exhibition was running, and the receipts went up about £3,000 or £3,500. When the Exhibition closed, and the ordinary rates were resumed, the receipts dropped again by that amount. I am confident that eight out of every ten that went with cheap tickets would not go now. Outside the railway station a man going up by the morning train would stop; he would meet another man, and ask him, "Are you going to Cork?" If the man said "Yes," he would tell him to wait at the corner. In that way he would collect twenty men, and then go to the station-master and hand him 30s for the twenty tickets, whereas if each man had gone separately the amount would have been £5, the ordinary fare being 6d.

38137. What influence do you draw?—None, except that when the return ticket was 1s. 6d. instead of 5s. the receipts over the whole line were between £3,000 and £3,500 a year more, and when the cheap fares were discontinued the receipts dropped.

38138. Sir N. Jekyll.—Do you know anything about the working expenses during the same period?—There were more working expenses during the period of the Exhibition, because the men had to work extra hours and were paid for it.

38139. Was the net profit to the company larger, do you know?—I think it was. The net profit was a good deal more, I think, speaking from memory.

38140. Mr. Seaton.—Do you think that a reduction of fares generally would tend to produce a development of traffic?—I have no doubt about it.

38141. But the railway companies, wanting each halfpenny to be as good as the last, will not lower fares or miles, and wait for the profit by development?—I was speaking to a manager, and he said, "I would be delighted to do it, but if it failed I would be ruined, and I am afraid to try it."

38142. The only way to get such a waiting policy wisely adopted would be through the public management of the lines, would it not?—I think that would be the best way to do it.

38143. You are confident that cheap fares would lead to greater profit?—Take the Courtmacsherry line; it is about 35 miles from Cork, and they give excursion tickets at 3d. a mile, and they are crowded.

38144. When you compare our 1d. a mile with the means of the Irish railways after he has provided for his family, or of the small occupier, does it not appear to you that there is a great disparity between that means and the fare of a penny a mile?—He cannot afford it.

38145. Let us say it was a halfpenny a mile; do you not think there might be 5s. or 6s. times the amount of travelling?—I think so.

38146. Do you consider there is anything in this so-called competition between railway companies, not in miles, but in facilities by different routes; is there anything in it which you can for a moment compare with the public benefit of reduction of rates and fair play to all localities?—I think if they were all put on a common basis it would be better for the companies, there would be give and take between the lines north and south, it would bring the people together, and it would be for the good of Ireland everywhere.

38147. A railway authority should act impartially between different places as far as possible?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Peck

Proposed powers to local bodies to control work on lines without recourse to Parliament.

38148. With regard to the discretionary powers which you would give to important local authorities, such as the Cork Corporation or Harbour Board, is the matter of the construction of railways, would you be in favour of giving such bodies absolute control, or should it be subject to some superior authority in the case of opposition?—In this case they were not asked to subscribe a penny.

38149. I gather that you think that these three important bodies might have been given fuller powers to deal with that particular railway?—There is no rate paid for it. The Great Western supplied the money; and all that was wanted was permission to make the bridge.

38150. Would you give such bodies absolute discretionary powers to say whether the line was to be built or not, taking all discretionary power away from any higher authority?—The Board of Trade would regulate whether the line was safe or not.

38151. I am not talking about the safety of the line. You object to the expense incurred by local authorities in coming over here to get permission to construct a line and so on, and I gather from your abstract of evidence that you would be in favour of allowing important local bodies to decide such a question for themselves?—In a question similar to that of making a bridge across the Lee I would, and for making light railways, and I believe that if, say, the City Council, the County Council and the Harbour Board recommended and promoted a Bill, the Privy Council in Dublin might have power to deal with it. Railways are for local benefit, and the local people are the best judges of them.

38152. In all these cases there is a considerable amount of local opposition?—There is.

38153. Would you be prepared to say that if the local authorities in a particular district, in the exercise of their discretion, thought that that opposition was not worthy of consideration they should have power to say, "We are satisfied that the opposition need not be entertained," would you let them have the last word?—No; these people would have an opportunity of giving expression to their views at home, they need not come across the water to do it.

38154. You would allow them to come to Dublin, but you wish to avoid the expense of coming to London?—Yes. The railway in Clonsilla is on the side of a hill. On the plans submitted to the Railway Commission, or whatever the tribunal was, there was certain lines of deviation. It happened that the lines of deviation in this case extended to a level where a horse could draw a ton weight; they went to the other extreme that put us on the top of the hill, a most "unconscionable" place. If the Bill had been promoted in Cork the local people would have objected to it, but it came across to London, and was allowed.

38155. But the Board of Works would have some thing to say to that?—But the local people ought to.

38156. But the people responsible for the proper engineering construction of the line would be the Board of Works; their engineer has to be satisfied as to the plans prepared by the local authority; it is not the Board of Trade?—But the Board of Trade had it in 1870.

38157. We need not argue the point as to the responsibility. You think that under the system which has prevailed in the past the responsibility has not been very efficiently discharged?—I think it is too expensive; the amount of money paid for Parliamentary expenses for making railways is too high.

38158. I see you give a list of the guaranteed railways in the County of Cork?—I get that from the Secretary to the County Council.

38159. Do I understand that in respect of the first system (the Glen Valley railway) the sums which the guaranteeing area had to pay for a considerable time are now being gradually refunded out of profits?—No. In the case of the Clonsilla line they cannot be refunded until the ordinary shareholders get 5s. per cent.

38160. But in respect of that line, the Clonsilla Extension Railway, you say that a sum of £5,034 4s. 10d. has been paid by the county, but the line is no longer a source of any expense?—That £5,000 will not be paid until the ordinary shareholders get five per cent. on their money.

38161. So that there is a very little probability of the County getting back any portion of the £5,000?—I do not think they will get a penny.

38162. Now, with regard to the Glen Valley Railway. The county was liable for £2,650 a year, but you say that for some years past the line has been earning more than the guaranteed interest, and the company has been refunding portions of the money paid by the county. What proportion has been paid back?—I could not tell you; that is all the information I have.

38163. It was opened 30 years ago. How long have they been paying back any portion?—About seven or eight years.

38164. And the guarantee expires in six years?—Yes.

38165. In respect of that line, is there any probability of the line getting back anything?—I think it will be all paid back.

38156 Now we come to the Bantry Extension Railway. That guarantee also is for thirty-five years, and the county is liable for £2,000 a year in respect of it. I see that with the exception of 1892 and 1893 you have had to pay the full amount year by year?—Yes.

38157 With regard to the Kanturk and Newmarket Railway, I understand that for thirteen years you were paying £3,000 a year?—That is outside my district altogether.

38158 It was originally five per cent. on £40,000, that is £2,000. It was five per cent. until 1891?—It has since been reduced to four per cent.; the line was taken over by the Great Southern and Western.

38159 In respect of that you were paying £2,000 a year for thirteen years?—Mr. O'Callaghan will speak as to that.

38160 You are now paying £1,600 a year?—Perhaps you will get that from Mr. O'Callaghan.

38161 You do not deal with any of these other roads?—No. There is one other matter I would like to mention. West Cork is a brown-stone, or shale, country, and the farmers, now that they have the land in their own hands, are anxious to improve it. Lime is very badly wanted for the improvement of the land, and they believe that the lime they get at Cadishead suits their land better than the lime sold in Cork City. Cadishead is on the Macroom line, and if the Macroom line was linked up with the Cork and Brandon line—they are only separated by about thirty feet—the lime could be delivered at stations on the South Coast Railway to South and South West Cork at an average of about 1s 6d per barrel. But the Macroom Company will not do that; they say that if they link up, the traffic will go over to the Cork and Brandon station. But this will allow the Brandon mail to be put next their rail, so that the line can be shelled from the Macroom Company's truck into the Cork and Brandon Company's truck. I think there should be some power to compel those companies to come to some understanding in a matter like that. It is very hard for any county to develop itself when handicapped in that fashion.

38162 Sir H. J. J. You mean that without any physical connection between the lines, they can begin to do, that the lime can be shelled from a truck on one line into a truck on the other?—Yes.

38163 Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—You propose that the County Council should distribute the dividends?—Yes.

38164 You would like to see that done?—Yes; it would save expense.

38165 I do not hold any shares in this particular light railway, but I do in others, and there is nothing stopped from my dividends?—I will tell you what has happened. On one of the railways—I will

not mention the name—the directors used to keep back the dividend for three or four months, and invest it in some stock—but not to put money in their pockets.

38166 Mr. Stenton—I hope they did not lose it?—They were very good for three years, but in the fourth year they dropped £80.

38167 Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—And that was paid by the shareholders, I suppose?—The auditor was asked to certify the accounts, and he would not, so they came to this conclusion. They sent a circular to the shareholders saying, "If you consent to have this amount deducted pro rata you will get your cheque; if you do not consent you will have to wait for it." They consented, and the £80 was gone.

38168 And what happened when they made a profit out of the transaction?—When they were fortunate in making a profit it went to the payment of the expenses.

38169 Did the shareholders get anything extra?—No; it went to pay the expenses of the distribution. I am chairman of one company, but we do not get a penny for the trouble of this distribution. We do not want it, but we think the shareholders or the people who have subscribed the money are entitled to what they were promised without these deductions for expenses. It would cost the County Council nothing.

38170 I should have thought that it would entail a considerable amount of expense to the County Council?—Including the Secretary's salary for keeping the transfer book, it costs us £26 for stamps and all the rest of it.

38171 Mr. Stenton.—For the two lines that you work?—Yes.

38172 Do you think that that would be entirely saved if you handed the distributions of the dividends over to the County Council?—Less the stamp duty.

38173 Colonel Hutchinson, P.C.—I think that if the County Council are asked to undertake the distribution of the dividends they will ask for an increased staff?—That is not my experience.

38174 Mr. Stenton.—When a light railway is owned by one company and worked by another, do the secretary and officers of the owning company do anything except distribute the dividends?—No; they are simply distributors of the dividends. They have nothing to say to the line. That is when the line does not pay.

The Secretary.—The County Secretary is auditor for the County Council for all these guaranteed light railways in Cork, and therefore the County Secretary necessarily does as much work as would enable him to distribute the dividends if the County Council had power to do it.

Nov 15, 1907.

Mr. Timothy J. Gusty, J.P., Representative of the Cork County Council.

Proposed that the County Council should distribute the dividends of several guaranteed lines.

Inconvenience and cost of existing arrangement.

Mr. CORNELIUS O'CALLAGHAN, J.P., CHAIRMAN by Sir HERBERT JENTLE (in the Chair).

38182 Mr. O'Callaghan, you are a Justice of the Peace?—Yes.

38183 And Vice-Chairman of the Cork County Council?—Yes.

38184 You have heard the evidence given by Mr. Gusty?—I have.

38185 Do you agree with what he said generally?—Thoroughly.

38186 But you have some other points of your own which you wish to bring forward?—Yes.

38187 I understand that you are not satisfied with the present system of management of the Irish railways?—No.

38188 Have you anything particular to say about passenger fares and freight on goods and cattle?—Yes. With regard to rates, I wish to deal practically with the case of the Kanturk and Newmarket Railway.

38189 Where does that line start?—The line starts at Banter, at a junction station on the Great Southern system.

38190 That is on the Kilkenny branch, is it not?—Yes.

38191 What is the length of the railway?—About eight and a half miles.

38192 How was the capital raised?—There was a guarantee of 5 per cent. on a capital of £40,000, to

be charged on that portion of the Kanturk Union in the barony of Duhallow. That is a perpetual guarantee of 5 per cent. on the Kanturk Union.

38193 Charged on a limited area, not on the whole barony?—Not on the barony, but on the area of the Kanturk rural district.

38194 A company was formed, was it not?—Yes, in August, 1887, and I believe it was the contractor that took all the shares.

38195 The contractor took all the shares—was the contractor the promoter?—It was the contractor, Mr. Worthington.

38196 Was there any representation of the ratepayers on the board of directors?—No.

38197 Who were the board of directors?—They were people nominated by the contractor and promoter. I may say that it costed much hostility at the time in the Kanturk district. When the company promoter went in the first instance to the Grand Jury, they were led away by plausible phrases as to the benefit the county would obtain, and the amount of labour that would be employed, and on the strength of that the associated ratepayers, who were only nominated on the Grand Jury from time to time, gave a partial guarantee which was subsequently confirmed.

38198 The contractor came along and persuaded

Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan, J.P., Representative of the Cork County Council.

The Kanturk and Newmarket railway.—In possession, location capital area of guarantee, &c.

Nov 15, 1897.

Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan, T.P., Representative of the Cork County Council.

Kantark and Newcastle Railway.—The beneficial guarantee.

Date of opening.

Appointment of arbitrators and their duties.

Report of Mr. John G. McCarthy, auditor to the Grand Jury of Cork in 1895 on the then financial condition.

His opinion that the proposed working agreement with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company was unfair to the guarantee.

the Grand Jury that it would be an excellent thing for the county to build this line?—Yes.

38202. And the Grand Jury fell in with that view and gave a guarantee?—Yes.

38203. And now the ratemakers are saddled with the guarantee?—Yes. In fact, the County Council, in 1896, got a perpetual guarantee of five per cent. on £40,000.

38204. Does the Treasury make a contribution?—No.

38205. Colonel Hutchinson Pea.—Was the capital found locally?—It was found by the promoter, the contractor; it was on the strength of the guarantee that the capital was found.

38206. Do you know if any of it was subscribed locally by the people in the district?—I enquired and could not find out. I heard that some of it was owned by the solicitor of the promoter, but I could get no information upon that point.

38207. The capital was really held by persons interested in making the line?—Yes. The letter of the then Chairman of the Kantark Board of Guardians, which is on pages four and five of my abstract of evidence, explains the matter very fully.

38208. Sir Herbert Jekyll.—The line was opened on April 1st, 1897?—Yes, and the Grand Jury commenced to pay the guarantee in 1892.

38209. The 13th Section of the Act provides for the appointment of three arbitrators, does it not?—Yes.

38210. What were the arbitrators to do?—To look into the working and into the accounts, I believe. As far as I could glean at the time, no definite information was forthcoming, and they really did not know how the thing stood. One of the arbitrators happened to be the County Surveyor of the County Cork, and he was at sea on the point.

38211. What were they appointed to do?—To look into the working, into the accounts, and ascertain how the capital was obtained.

38212. Mr. Seaton.—To scrutinize the accounts?—Yes. The accounts were scrutinized by a very capable man, who happened to be the Treasurer of the Grand Jury, Mr. John George McCarthy, the auditor, in his report to the Grand Jury at the Spring Session of 1890—which appears on page six of my abstract of evidence—explains the whole satisfaction very fully.

38213. Unless you tell us the substance of it actually, it will not appear on the Notes?—Then perhaps I might just read it?—"In my report to the Grand Jury at Spring Assizes, 1890, I showed that for the previous half-year there was a loss of £21 2s. 10d per mile per week on the working of the above railway. In the month of October last a prospectus was issued, offering to the public by the Directors, on behalf of the contractor, 4,000 Five per Cent. Perpetual Redeemable Guaranteed Shares of £10 each, at £11 each, and £15,000 worth of Debenture Stock in sums of £100 each, at £110. In said Prospectus, the following paragraph appears:—'The Great Southern and Western Railway Company are so satisfied with the construction of this line and its earnings since it was opened for traffic, that they propose to work the line for twenty-one years at £4 per mile per week, and one-fourth of the receipts over that amount. This arrangement will, as stated by the Chairman of the Kantark and Newcastle Company at the half-yearly meeting, not alone ensure the payment of five per cent. on the Debenture Stock, but also have a balance to go to the credit of the company in relief of the guarantee. Interest—Five per cent. per annum interest is in perpetuity guaranteed by Act of Parliament on the Guaranteed Shares, while the line is open for traffic, which is secured by the agreement with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company above referred to. This interest is payable out of the rates, and is chargeable on that portion of the Union of Kantark, situated in the barony of Dalishore and County of Cork, including the towns of Kantark and Newcastle, with a Government valuation of over £55,000. The receipts of this line now, after deducting the amount payable to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, for working and

all other expenses, leaves a profit, not only sufficient to pay five per cent. interest on the Debenture Stock, but to carry forward a substantial margin to the credit of the Guaranteeing Barometer. According to the accounts of the Company for the half-year ended 31st December last, there has been a loss on the half-year's working of £416 0s. 2d., equal to £1 16s. 6d per mile per week. The Directors in their report to the shareholders for the half-yearly meeting to be held in Dublin, on the 19th instant, express their regret that the working agreement with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company has not yet been finally approved of by that Company, although every effort has been made on the part of the Directors to have the matter closed; however, negotiations are still pending, and the Directors will not relax their efforts to have the agreement perfected with as little delay as possible. This is quite at variance with the statements in the Prospectus, which apparently was issued with the sanction of the Directors. The guarantee given by the Grand Jury of five per cent. on £40,000, and which is referred to in sections 13 and 17 of the Act, 50 and 51 Vic., only holds good while the line is working when open for traffic. The line was opened for traffic on 1st April, 1890, and between that date and the 31st December, 1890, the liability of the ratemakers has been £3,500, besides which there is now a debit balance on the net revenue account of £2,042 1s. 3d., both sums amounting to £5,542 1s. 3d., being the amount necessary to pay interest at the rate of five per cent. on £30,000 Debenture and on £40,000 Guaranteed Shares for the very short period of one year and nine months. The Directors have considered it necessary to curtail train service, so as to reduce the expenditure under the head of locomotive power. Clearly, it would be a decided saving to many of the ratemakers if the Directors went further and closed the line altogether for traffic, as thereby the ratemakers would be relieved of the very large sum of £3,000 a year. In future, when Grand Jurors approve of giving guarantee, too much care cannot be taken to safeguard the interests of the ratemakers. In this case, neither the Grand Jury nor the ratemakers have any voice in the election of the Directors, the consequence being that the affairs of the Company are controlled by a Board, the greater number of whom are located in Dublin, to which place the officers and Secretary have been transferred."—John G. McCarthy, Auditor Cork, 12th March, 1891."

38214. Sir H. Jekyll.—The effect of this transaction is that there is a heavy burden laid upon the ratemakers; do you know what it amounts to?—At the time of the amalgamation with the Great Southern in 1893 the Cork County Council opposed amalgamation; I am sorry Mr. Acworth is not here; he was our counsel at the time, and very good service he gave us, we got the guarantee reduced from five to four per cent, thereby reducing the amount from £3,600 to £1,600, which we pay still.

38215. What does it amount to in the pound?—It varies from 5d. to 7d.

38216. Are there any prospects of improvement in that line likely to reduce the liability of the barony?—I should think there is if the line was extended; if there was a connection made to Newcastle in County Limerick.

38217. That would entail raising fresh capital?—Yes, but it is too short to pay by itself. If it joined the Great Southern system it would open a very extensive country.

38218. What sort of country is it in between?—There are fine limestone quarries at Mechna.

38219. Is there any population in the district?—Yes, but the land is not too good.

38220. Is there any probability of trade being developed there at all?—I would not say there is very much.

38221. It is a considerable length of line to make, and it would require some trade to justify the expense of making the line?—At the same time the country is not served by any railway.

38222. To come to the general question, have you any views as to the best arrangement to be made for the administration of Irish railways generally?—May I just say what the ratemakers of the district receive for this enormous tax? First of all, if you

want to go to London via Dublin from Kantank you must wait until you go to Banteer to get a through ticket. That is on the main line.

38232. There is no through booking from Kantank?—No, not via Dublin; but if you go via Rosslare you can book from Kantank. The connection via Fishguard is no benefit to the country; it may be so regarding facilities, but it is not as regards completion at times.

38233. Mr. Staines.—If you go to England via Rosslare they will give you a through ticket from Kantank; but if you wish to go via Dublin they will not.—Via Dublin they will not.

38234. Colonel Hutchinson Peet.—But that does not apply since the judgment of the Railway Commission does it?—They are bound to give through rates by virtue of that judgment. Have you tried to get a ticket since that judgment was delivered?—No.

38235. Sir H. Jekyll.—You are able to book through from Banteer?—Yes.

38236. And you have to change in any case at Banteer?—Yes.

38237. Then is the want of through booking any great inconvenience?—Not too much.

38238. You have to change at Banteer anyway?—Yes. Besides that, the train service on the Kantank-Newmarket line is very bad; it is not at all for the benefit of the people. North of Mallow you cannot get into Newmarket before two o'clock in the day.

38239. Is that on account of the bad connection at Mallow?—Yes.

38240. Is there anything else you wish to say about the Newmarket line?—No.

38241. Have you any observations you wish to make with regard to the Cork and Macroom line?—With regard to that question, I think there should be connection at Capwell station with the Cork and Brandon Railway. I might mention that since the Land Purchase Act came into operation great efforts have been made by the people in Cork County to improve the land, and they are very anxious to move line from different parts of the county in their district. But the facility cannot be afforded by the railway company on account of this disconnection with the Cork and Macroom line.

38242. What you complain of is the want of connection of the different lines at Cork?—Yes.

38243. They all come into their own terminal stations?—Yes. Even the bridging of the Lee will be of no advantage to the people on the Macroom line, who, I may say, are most industrious, and raise the very best breeds of cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs, which nearly all come through Cork, unless this connection with the Cork and Brandon Railway is made, and I believe three pairs of rails would make the necessary connection.

38244. Are any ships being taken by the railway companies to make the connection?—I can only speak from hearsay, but I heard that the Macroom Company are sitting tight.

38245. Are they favourable to the connection or opposed to it?—At present they are opposed to it; it is a question of time, I should think.

38246. You would like to see them compelled to make the connection?—Yes; I should very much like to see it.

38247. What is the remedy for all this that you would be in favour of?—In the first place I would be in favour of the nationalisation of the railways.

38248. Of all the railways in Ireland?—Yes. I think they should be the property of the country. Private enterprise has tried long enough, and has been found wanting.

38249. How do you propose that that operation should be carried out?—The task ought not to present any difficulties, as the present holders of the Irish railway stock, which is about £40,000,000, would, I can say, take an exchange of Government railway stock bearing interest at from 3 to 3½ per cent., and as the average dividends paid to the shareholders have been about the latter figure, no possible loss could come to the State by the purchase.

38250. Do you think it is likely that so far from there being an actual loss there would be a considerable gain?—I am sure there should be a gain. My reason for stating so is that you have so many boats, so many traffic managers, that relied in the

establishment charges would rebound to the general good.

38251. You would recommend the establishment of an Irish board to manage the railways?—I would.

38252. You want to keep clear of the Imperial Government altogether?—I am not so fond of the Imperial Government, so far as dealing with Irish money is concerned.

38253. Supposing any loss occurred, how would you provide for that? Would you make the local rates responsible for any deficiency?—No. As I do not anticipate any loss, I would not object to have a clause inserted in the nationalisation Bill for making the local rates responsible for any deficiency, provided also that it was made a condition that the surplus earnings should be applied to the local rates according to the valuation of each county, nor would I object to have the application and allocation of the profits left to the discretion of the Railway Board for the improvement of congested districts.

38254. Perhaps it is as hardly necessary to go into such details?—I took the trouble to go into it for your information. Cork County is a large and rich county, but at the same time there are three or four congested areas within it, and these congested areas are paying big railway guarantees. In fact they are paying too much already, and any increase we may make in the richer portion of the county I am in favour of going to the relief of these poorer districts.

38255. You have given particulars of the baronial guaranteed railways; are they all in the County of Cork?—Yes.

Examined by Mr. Staines.

38256. You are at one with Mr. Cauty on the general question?—Yes.

38257. And you both speak for the County Council as a whole?—Yes, for the County Council as a whole.

38258. And generally for the county?—Yes, for the elected mind.

38259. You know the main concern for the pressure which exists for a change in the railway system?—Yes.

38260. They are that the Irish produce is at a disadvantage in the British market, and that the Irish manufacturers is at a disadvantage as against imported goods?—Yes.

38261. So that whether we look at it from the agricultural or from the general industrial point of view, it is equally important?—Yes. We are hit by this system of through rates without any corresponding advantage.

38262. The country has been brought very low by loss and arrangements, and you think it is time that by law and arrangements some improvement was made?—Ready time.

38263. So that something might be done to undo the evils which have been brought about?—Yes.

38264. The indispensable thing apparently is that the savings which might be made by the application of the public credit to the purchase of these lines, and by united working, should be placed in Irish hands for Irish use?—I should think so.

38265. You agree that if the Imperial Government bought the lines there would be danger that any profits that accrued might be used for Imperial purposes?—I would prefer that the lines should stop as they are rather than that the Imperial Government should have complete control over them.

38266. That is a strong expression, but I am not surprised that you should say it?—I do say so, because I know how keen Englishmen are in money matters, and they would use it for the interests of their own country.

38267. Do you think that most of the community in Ireland would be very doubtful of any resulting benefit if the railways were especially owned and administered?—I think the public mind would be perfectly hostile to it.

38268. Therefore you would say that if there is any sincere desire to do any good for Ireland, the question be approached in the only way that Ireland can accept?—Yes, an Irish authority.

38269. Vesting the lines in an Irish authority?—Of course subject to the Imperial control.

38270. What do you say to this?—Why should not an Irish representative authority borrow from the Treasury, or, if it cannot borrow from the Treasury,

Nov 15, 1907.

Mr. Cornelius O'Donoghue, J.P., Representative of the Cork County Council.

Anticipations as to economies consequent on nationalisation of the Irish railways.

The administration of the railway by an Irish authority free from the Imperial Government control suggested.

The liability of the local rates for deficiencies in revenue as objectionable.

The Cork County Council members in the recommendations for nationalisation &c.

A revision of the railway rates necessary if inferiority are to be developed.

Any surplus profits arising from unified railway working to be spent on Irish use exclusively.

Control of the railways by an Irish authority on essential in any scheme of reform.

Nov. 15, 1897.
Mr. Curran
(F.O. Dublin,
J.P.),
Representative
of the
County
Council.

borrow on the security of the railways and of the rates; either way, why should not the authority which borrows the money and accepts the responsibility for repayment over the lines?—Why not?

38261. You say that the line should be vested in an Irish authority, that such authority should have power to appropriate the profits of the lines from year to year for the development of the system and reduction of the rates as circumstances may require?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON P.B.

Failure of the
County Cork
Grand Jury to
approve the
expenses of
the guaranteed
capital for the
Kantark and
Newmarket
railway.

38262. About this Kantark line. The circumstances under which the line was promoted and, according to your account, financed, seem to be rather remarkable. Do I understand you to say that when the Grand Jury passed the presentment for £40,000 they were so indifferent as to the power given to the contractor and the promoting people that they absolutely abandoned all voice in the supervision of it?—They abandoned it completely.

38263. And did not appoint anyone to represent the ratepayers of the guaranteeing area?—As a matter of fact, my belief is that three or four times they tried to undo the error and they could not.

38264. In the first few years they let the people do just as they liked?—Yes.

38265. I gather that it was on the very prospectus that was issued the county came forward and took up the money?—Yes.

38266. Subsequently, when the Great Southern and Western came into the question, you say that they took it over and took over the £40,000 of guaranteed capital and also £20,000 of debentures?—Yes.

38267. I do not understand that part of it. They did not create a debenture charge, at any rate, there was no guarantee in regard to the debenture charge?—At that time we opposed the Amalgamation Bill of the Waterford and Limerick in 1900. Our county was the only southern county that opposed amalgamation, and we opposed it on account of the Kantark and Newmarket Railway, and the treatment we received in that portion of the county from the Great Southern. In order to placate us in some way they said they would reduce the guarantee from £2,000 to £1,000, from 5 per cent to 4 per cent.

38268. But the guaranteeing area was never responsible for more than the guaranteed interest on the £40,000?—No.

38269. They were never responsible for the debenture charge, whatever it was; but at any rate for some twelve years you paid £2,000, and subsequently to the Amalgamation Act, £1,600?—Yes.

38270. You refer in your abstract of evidence to some agreement. In the prospectus the promoters pointed out that "the Great Southern and Western Railway Company are so satisfied with the construction of this line and its earnings since it was opened for traffic, that they propose to work the line for ninety-nine years at £4 per mile per week and one-fourth of the receipts over that amount"; and subsequently the directors expressed their regret that the agreement with the Great Southern and Western had not been completed?—Yes.

38271. Was it ever completed? I am not aware that it was.

38272. You do not know on what terms the Great Southern and Western took the line over?—No. I would be very glad if that could be explained by Mr. Barrington.

Mr. O'Brien Barrington, Solicitor.—We purchased the line. For a long period there were not any profits. Ultimately the Great Southern purchased it. I think the sum we paid was £60,000, including the guaranteed capital and debentures, and this gentleman has correctly stated what subsequently occurred.

Colonel Hutchison P.B.—The guaranteeing area only paid interest in respect of the £40,000?

Mr. O'Brien Barrington, Solicitor.—We provided the cash.

Witness.—The line was very badly made by the contractor.

38273. Colonel Hutchison P.B.—I suppose the guaranteeing area was also responsible for any deficit in the working expenses, is not that so?—Yes.

38274. So that not only were they saddled with the £2,000, but with something like £700 or £800 a year in respect of working expenses until the Great Southern and Western took it over?—Yes.

38275. In respect of the Railway extension you pay £2,000 a year?—Yes.

38276. You have paid that with the exception of a couple of years?—Yes.

38277. You pay in respect of the Kantark and Newmarket Railway in perpetuity?—Yes.

38278. With respect to the Ballinacorney, Timoleague, and Courtmasherry Railway, you are paying in perpetuity?—Yes, £1,750 a year.

38279. And you are liable also for a deficit in that case of something like £700 a year?—Yes.

38280. For the Strill and Stillmoreen Light Railway you also have a perpetual guarantee of £1,700?—Yes.

38281. And a deficit of £1,100 a year?—£1,100.

38282. In regard to the Mitchelstown and Parnoy Railway, you are liable for £200 a year, which expires in 1900?—Yes.

38283. Donaghmore Extension Light Railway, £600 a year in perpetuity?—Yes.

38284. The Cork and Muskerry, £260 a year in perpetuity?—Yes.

38285. In other words, Cork County is paying £8,500 a year in annual charges in respect of interest, and £2,000 in respect of deficits; is that so?—That is so; it represents nearly £5 in the pound on the whole valuation.

38286. £11,000 is the annual liability in respect of interest and deficits in working expenses?—Yes. A penny in the pound in Cork County is about £4,130 a year; we are really paying about thence in the pound.

38287. I should have thought it was more than that. At any rate, you are paying about £11,000 a year in respect of those railways. Have you any representation under existing arrangements on the Great Southern and Western?—No representation at all. It is simply a case of "pay, pay."

38288. The arbitrators are simply appointed by the Board of Trade in the first instance on the application of the Railway Company, and they generally refer the matter to the Board of Works?—Yes.

38289. Have you anything to say about that?—No.

Dr. THOMAS LAFAN examined by Mr. H. JERRELL (in the Chair).

Dr. Thomas
Lafan,
Representative
of the
Cashed Urban
District
Council.

38290. Dr. Lafan, you appear on behalf of the Cashed Urban District Council?—Yes.

38291. And you have some evidence to give as to the system of guarantee, I understand?—I should like to premise by saying that my Council are entirely in favour of amalgamation under a central Irish Board. But assuming that does not take place immediately, we are of opinion that the present system of guarantee requires very considerable amendment.

38292. You are speaking of hereditary guarantee?—Yes. We were certainly a whole generation getting a guarantee ourselves, and we think we were very badly treated that we did not get one long ago. We think there are other railways which could be made with great advantage to Ireland if the local people could only be got to give them. I cannot say much blame the local people, because of the

money that is to make them has to come out of a limited area the people may be very well excused if they decline to give guarantee. That is one of the advantages of a central body, which could make a guarantee upon the whole nation.

38293. You are opposed to the whole system of guarantee by limited areas?—Exactly. As a proof of how unjust the present system of guaranteed works I may mention the town of Clonsilla. That town derives more advantage than any other town or any district served by the line running between Thurles and Clonsilla, and it never gave a penny in the shape of any contribution itself. While we in Clonsilla were seeking for a guarantee special exemption had to be made of the town of Clonsilla in order to secure the guarantee.

38294. Why is that?—That was some few years ago, in 1891, I think.

Representative
of the railway
and control by
a central Irish
authority recommended.

A charge in
the present
system of
railway
guarantee
admitted.

38296 Why was it left out?—Their opposition would have been fatal to our application, and in order to smooth matters we consented to their being left out. That emphasises the injustice of the system.

38296 What tribunal was it that decided the area?—It was the County Council, but the Grand Jurors were just as saving here, and had they been in existence at the time I expect that their view would have been pretty much the same. Special provision must be made for guarantees, which offer the only chance for the making of lines, which are wanted in the interest of the whole nation. One such line, for instance, is that which would open up the Killybeg and Bellagarry collieries. Such cannot now be made, because the local profits would not warrant local guarantees. Existing guarantees were as a rule obtained under false pretences. The authorities were told that the guarantee would never be asked for. In the outcome they were always asked for.

38297 Mr. Justice.—And often a great deal more than was anticipated?—As much at any rate. If the present system is continued there ought to be some means not only of compelling the local body to give a guarantee, but to spread the guarantee over a large area. I do not see how this is to be done except through a central body. It would be a mere makeshift to have a Judge of Assize do it, but something must be done if a great many small lines which would be of great public advantage are to be made; they cannot be made under the present system.

38298 Sir H. Jekyll.—If a small line is made for the exclusive benefit of a limited area, is it not fair that that area should pay for it?—It is, but the expenses may be so considerable that the area would not be able to pay for it. Furthermore, there is no line where the profit would be exclusively confined to the small area. This line in Cashel, for instance, is of considerable advantage to the whole country, and ought to have been made long ago. The sole benefit of the line does not go to the district. A considerable margin goes to the nation at large, and the nation at large ought to pay for it, and the only way in which that can be done is through some central managing body. With regard to the present system of guarantees, there is another matter to be looked at. When the guarantee is given, there is no provision made at all by which the guaranteeing body can have any share in the making of the line or in the subsequent working of it. A little line from Cashel to Good's Cross was splendidly made as far as a layman can judge, but it cost over £10,000 a mile, an enormous sum as things go nowadays. The length of the line was 3 miles 6 furlongs 4 chains, and the expenditure was nearly £60,000, so that balancing one thing against another, it cost over £20,000 a mile. We cannot understand how it came to cost so much. It may be our ignorance, but we would be very much happier if we knew exactly how the whole thing was managed, how the contract was given, and how the work was carried out. But to offer the giving of the contract or the subsequent work we had nothing to say. We sent up our Solicitor and the Town Clerk to one of the arbitrators or assessors, and they had to sit in dumb show at the performance; they were cooly told that they might ask any questions, but how could they ask any questions when the book was shut down and they were shut out from any inspection of the accounts. We think that that is a state of things which is rather a strange one. If we have to pay the price, we ought to have something to say to the tune. We do not know how the money was made out. While I do not find any fault with the Great Southern and Western, we were for a long time kept out of our line; but Lord Derby, who was a Cabinet Minister at the time, got the line to go through his property. We were thirty years without a line, and when we got a line we only got a branch line. The nation at large has suffered from that, because Kington and Queenstown are seventeen miles further apart than they would have been if the Cashel scheme had been carried out. The whole scheme of guarantees requires revision, and the fundamental line of revision would be a central board. Then again, we certainly think that the people who

give the guarantee ought not to be out in the cold when the making of the line and the subsequent working of the line required to be carried out.

38299 I think you have some proposal to put forward with regard to a cheap court for the settlement of disputes?—That all hangs on the continuance of the present state of things. If that is continued, there must be some improvement by which people will not be terrified from going into court. At present they shrink that performance, and the result is that the railway companies, being supplied with ample funds, are masters of the situation.

38300 Have you thought out in your own mind what that cheap court should be?—Cheap courts are very often very worthless courts, and it is sometimes better to pay a bigger price in the Dublin Court than a smaller one in the Quarter Sessions Court. But if the whole management were handed over to one body, there would be no necessity for this court; but if we are not to have that I do not see anything but the Quarter Sessions Court with some limitations to the right of appeal. If there is to be an appeal from Court to Court, you might as well go at once to the big Court. With regard to goods and other matters about which I, not being a trader, am necessarily largely in the dark, I have followed the evidence, and I may say for my own body and for myself, that we are entirely at one with the case which has been made out for the greater protection of Irish commerce and Irish industry. We look upon that as a cardinal point in connection with the establishment of a central board.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON P.C.

38301 I think you made a complaint as to the present system of granting not giving the guaranteeing areas any look in?—Yes.

38302 But you know that they are entitled to have a voice, as arbitrators are appointed by the Board of Trade and the Board of Works, one of whom must be the County Surveyor, to examine these accounts half-yearly, and an abstract of the accounts is sent to the Grand Jury or to the County Council?—That applied to the Southern line, and there was a director appointed by the Grand Jury. The County Secretary informs me that he is not aware if the present County Council allowed that right to lapse, but certainly he has not had to deal with the re-appointment of this director. Through some omission in connection with the Cashel line, no provision was made in the Act for the appointment of a director.

38303 Are you paying anything in respect of the guaranteed interest?—Fourteen pence in the pound in Cashel.

38304 In respect of the little Cashel and Good's Cross line?—Yes. But I do not think we have any right to object; we have got value for the money, and the line is a very good line.

38305 Mr. Oliver Barrington, Solicitor.—And the guarantee is for twenty-five years?—(Witness)—It is limited; but there is no provision in that Act, through one of those omissions which public bodies, in spite of their assumed wisdom, sometimes make, for the appointment of the County Surveyor to look after the business.

38306 Colonel Hutcheson P.C.—That was constructed before the Light Railways Act came into force, was it not?—No, we tried it under the Light Railways Act, but were defeated on a technical point before the Privy Council twenty years ago; it has only been completed about three years.

38307 Yet you have had no voice in the representation?—No. We do not see anything in the Act of Parliament which would prevent the auditors when being appointed by the Board of Trade being told as a condition of his appointment that he should let a representative of the guaranteeing bodies see the accounts. Of course, we do not know that it would make any difference; we are in entire ignorance on the point, but we should feel very much more comfortable if we had a peep behind the scenes to see how things were carried out.

38308 Under all the Light Railway Acts that is provided for?—But this is not under the Light Railway Act, and we would like to know exactly where we are.

Nov. 15, 1907.

Dr. Thomas Lister, Representative of the Cashel Urban District Council.

The present system of auditing considered as affecting the interests of the guaranteeing area, and the working of the line after construction.

The cost of proceedings before the Railway and Canal Commission, and the effect of the same on the working of the line.

The settlement of the Court of Quarter Sessions suggested.

A motion of order to give protection to Irish industries suggested.

Complaint as to the present ineffective system of local audits in connection with guaranteed railways.

Payments for the Cashel and Good's Cross line under guarantee.

Promotion of the line under the Light Railways Act before the Privy Council.

May 15, 1907

Dr. Thomas
Laffan,
Representative
of the
Dublin Urban
District
Council.

Further
evidence in
detail only
possible
through an
Irish repre-
sentative
body.

38308. Did I understand you to say that you would be in favour of giving a Judge of Assize power, in the case of the local authority refusing to lend the money, to guarantee money for the promotion of lines?—That is a very lame way of going about the business; the only really business-like way is through a central body.

38309. But probably if there were dissatisfaction expressed at the local authority, such as the County Council, fixing the area of charge, there would be much more dissatisfaction expressed if a Judge of Assize did it?—I think a county body would only object when it was fairly convinced that it was being asked to burn its fingers again. The only real way to make a small line to open up collieries, for instance, which are doubly of importance now, is by means of a national arrangement which can only be carried out through a national body.

38310. But one reason why you advocate some power being given over the heads of the local bodies is that the advantages conferred by the construction of a railway are not confined to the district which that railway serves?—That is so; it covers more than the mere area through which it runs.

38311. Can you conceive of any system of railway administration conducted on existing lines, or on lines at all analogous to the present, ever being able to develop and make lines that would give satisfaction to the country generally?—I do not think any amalgamation or piling up of series of directorates would do what a body elected by the whole mass of ratepayers would.

38312. It could only be effected by some central system?—Some central elected body. There are plenty of short lines which could be made with great national advantage, but local bodies would not attempt to make them at all, because they are always told that they will not have to pay, and then by-and-by they are well mulcted.

38313. Unless there is some radical change you can never hope to have any further extensions?—No. And some of them would be of vital importance.

Examined by Mr. SHERIDAN.

38315. You have made some secondary suggestions in your abstract of evidence, but you wish the Commission to understand that the thing really worth considering in connection with the Irish railway system is fundamental reform?—Exactly. They are only put down as poor alternatives.

38316. To come during the time before the adoption of the final cure?—Yes.

38317. About this guarantee question, I understood you to be of opinion that if the present system of placing the burden upon a limited area be maintained, whilst at the same time people who have to pay are kept at so great a distance from control or even influence over or scrutiny of the business, the system will not go on?—It may go on, but it will be very largely and to the disadvantage of the people.

38318. Our experience of recent years tends to show that the system is slowing down, does it not?—There are several people now who raise the very same question as to being kept out in the cold, and so on.

38319. If we look over the quarter of a century since 1833, and regard the attitude of the Treasury

at present as well as that of localities, it would appear that the system of guarantee has broken down?—It has broken down in this way. Nothing could be lazier than to give a guarantee and have nothing whatever to say to the subsequent making of the line. A number of speculators start a line, and they do not care how they make it, and as things stand the people who have to pay the money in time to come are really without either voice or influence in the making of the line, or the subsequent working of it.

38320. The development of Ireland still requires a considerable number of minor and subsidiary lines, is there any prospect of those lines being made within any reasonable time unless through the agency of an Irish representative body?—None whatever.

38321. As to the lines which now exist, I take it that you are in general agreement with the evidence here, which defines the main evils as being two—the restriction of the export trade by the excess of the export rates from Ireland, as compared with the import rates into England from abroad and the suppression of Irish manufactures by the low import rates into Ireland as compared with the inland rates?—I am entirely with you on that point. I did not enlarge upon it, because I did not wish to weary the Commission with a repetition of evidence already given.

38322. If these evils are to be cured, is it not essential that the Irish railways should be owned and worked by a body knowing the country, sympathizing with the country, and possessing the confidence of the country?—Oh, yes. And I may as well add, not to least about the Irish, that I entirely agree with the gentleman who said he would rather than were to change at all that the system should be in the hands of an English board. If they had possession of it, they would just use it for their own purposes.

38323. You want a body that could be relied upon?—That would thank of the Irish public and the Irish ratepayer.

38324. You want a body that could be relied upon to make the proper deductions in rates, and to take care that the profit accruing should be used for Irish purposes?—It might be years before there was anything but a dead loss, but, speaking as an amateur, I say it is such a vital asset in the interests of the country that no price would be too great to pay for this management up to that point when it would confer the maximum benefit. It is not a shareholder's business at all. Of course, the shareholders should be honestly dealt with and should not be robbed, but the country, which has given a monopoly to private individuals, ought to reserve possession of the railways; and I believe there is an Act of Parliament in existence which will allow railways to be purchased for the public benefit.

38325. By arbitration?—Yes.

38326. If provision for a certain number of years' purchase of railways which pay over ten per cent; but they do not pay that in Ireland, and the alternative made in the Act of 1844 is arbitration. Apart from that, the only body to which Irishmen would look with confidence would be an Irish representative body, and, therefore you consider it would be idle to offer any other settlement as a solution?—I am sure the country would not listen to it.

The Commission adjourned till the following morning at 11 o'clock

SIXTY-SECOND PUBLIC SITTING.—SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH, 1907.

In the Board Room, Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Office, Westminster, London.

Commissioners present:—Sir CHARLES SCOTTER, BART., Chairman, Right Hon. LORD PIERRE, P.C., Sir HERBERT JENKIN, K.C.M.G., Colonel WILLIAM HUTCHINSON FOR, C.B., and Mr. JOHN AUDLEY FREDERICK ASPINKALL.

Mr. GEORGE E. SHANAHAN (Secretary).

At the sitting of the Commission,

SH Herbert Jenkin said.—Mr. Chairman, I have received a memorandum from the Board of Trade describing the part which the Department took in the opening of the Schull and Skibbereen Railway. Shall I put it in?

Chairman.—I think it is better to have it printed in the minutes of our proceedings.

[Document put in.]

THE SCULL AND SKIBBEREEN TRAMWAY AND LIGHT RAILWAY.

Particulars of Line.

This line was authorised by the Schull and Skibbereen Tramway and Light Railway Order, 1885, the promoters being the West Carbery Tramways and Light Railways Company, Limited.

It is a single line about 24½ miles in length, laid partly along the side of the public road and partly on private lands. Its gauge is three feet.

Deposit of Plans.

Plans of the line as stated in the Order were deposited with the Grand Jury of the County of Cork and also in the Council Office, Dublin Castle, and in the Presentation of the Grand Jury, which forms the First Schedule to the Order, they state as follows:—

Undertaking as described in Plans, etc., approved by Grand Jury.

"We hereby approve of the undertaking and of the construction, maintenance, and working by the Company of the undertaking in the discretion and according to the levels specified and described in the plans, books of reference, and sections deposited with the Secretary of the Grand Jury."

Board of Trade approved of Plans not required.

The Order did not require the deposit of plans of the projected line with the Board of Trade for approval or otherwise, and the Board are in no way responsible for the authorised curves and gradients.

Inspection of Line under Regulation of Railways Act, 1842.

When the line was approaching completion, notices of the Company's intention to open it for passenger traffic were given to the Board of Trade, pursuant to the Regulation of Railways Act, 1842, which is, when circumstances admit, applicable to lines constructed under Orders in Council made pursuant to the Tramways (Ireland) Acts.

Board of Trade's Powers defined.

Under the Act of 1842, the Board of Trade have only power to postpone the opening of a railway when an Inspecting Officer reports to them that such opening "would be attended with danger to the public using the same by reason of the incompleteness of the works or permanent way, or the insufficiency of the establishment for working such railway" (Section 6 of Act).

Questions, therefore, of departure from specifications on the part of contractors are not within an Inspecting Officer's purview, whose function is confined to determining whether or not from any of the causes mentioned above it is necessary to postpone the opening of a line for traffic.

Report of Inspection by General Hutchinson, dated 2nd September, 1896.

The Schull and Skibbereen line was inspected by Major-General Hutchinson, on behalf of the Board of Trade, in August, 1896, and on the 2nd September, 1896, General Hutchinson made a report, of which copies were sent respectively to the West Carbery Tramways, etc., Company and the Council Office, Dublin Castle. The following extracts from this report are of interest:—

Curves.

"The sharpest authorised curve is 2½ chains. Six of these curves were authorised, but by improvements effected in the laying out of the line, the number has been reduced to three. These have been provided with check rails."

Permanent Way.

"The permanent way consists of flat bottomed steel rails, nominally 30 feet long, weighing 45 lbs to the yard, fixed at the joints with fish plates 18 inches long; on transverse sleepers of Irish larch, 6 feet by (as maximum dimensions) 8½ inches by 4½ inches, set to each 20 feet."

The rails are secured to the sleepers by dog spikes only, except (1) on gradients steeper than 1 in 70, where there are tang bolts at each end of each rail, (2) on curves of 3 chains radius and less, where there are two pairs of sole plates under each rail, and (3) on gradients steeper than 1 in 70, combined with curves of 5 chains radius and less, where there are four pairs of tang bolts and two pairs of sole plates to each rail."

Cork County Surveyor satisfied.

"The County Surveyor of the West Division of Cork attended, and informed me that he was generally satisfied with the condition of the line (except as regards some few matters which were in course of completion), and had no objection to its being opened for traffic."

Conditions upon which Safe Working depends.

"The safe working of the line will, to a very great extent, depend upon the observance of a very moderate rate of speed. This is limited by the Order to twelve miles an hour where the line is on the side of the road . . . should never be allowed to exceed fifteen miles an hour at other parts of the line." (The Inspecting Officer then mentioned certain places at which (a) absolute stops should be made and (b) speed should be reduced to six miles an hour and to four miles an hour. The places in question are specified in the Regulations referred to below.)

Finally, General Hutchinson recommended that the line should be sanctioned subject to compliance with a few requirements which he enumerated and to the conditions specified in the Report as to speed, etc.

Nov. 18, 1897. *Board of Trade certify Line as fit for Traffic and issue Regulations as to use of Steam Power.*

Memorandum from the Board of Trade as to the opening of the Dublin and Skibbereen Light Railway.

The Board, therefore, on September 26th, issued a formal certificate that the line was fit for public traffic, and they also issued on the same date detailed Regulations under Section 33 of the Order with regard to the use of steam power. (A draft of these regulations had previously been sent to the Irish Government, who intimated that they had no objections to offer thereon.)

Application to Board of Trade for Inquiry into Stoppage of Traffic on Line owing to Breakdown of Engines—Inquiry Ordered.

In April, 1897, it was represented to the Board of Trade by more than twenty newspapers of the guaranteeing area that traffic on the line had been stopped owing to the breakdown of the three engines, which had previously been in use, and the Board thereupon appointed Major-General Hutchinson to inquire, pursuant to Section 45 of the authorising Order whether the promoters of the railway had "made any default in the working or maintaining of the line."

Result of Inquiry proves Promoters in Default.—Report of Engines and Permanent Way considered necessary—Use of Larch Sleepers.

The result of the inquiry was stated by General Hutchinson in a Report, dated June 12th, 1897. The Inspecting Officer found that a default in working and maintenance had been proved, and he considered it absolutely necessary (1) that the three engines belonging to the Company should be fitted with new copper fire boxes, and otherwise repaired; (2) that improvements in widening banks, supplying additional ballast, regulating curves, and other minor matters should be effected in the permanent way, and (3) that the engine turn-tables at the terminus should be put in order. He also pointed out in the report that the turn-tables had got out of order about the previous Christmas, that the banks had settled down (as new banks have always a tendency to do); that some of the curves had got out of shape; that in two instances the gradients appeared to be slightly in excess of the steepest authorised gradient, viz.:

1 in 25 for a short distance instead of 1 in 30; and that (as appeared from evidence given by Mr. T. Creggan, Inspector of Permanent Way) Baltic red wood sleepers had been required by the specification, while larch sleepers had been supplied instead. A note of Mr. Creggan's evidence, attached to the Report, shows that he said that the Engineer to the Promoters had stated that he considered larch better than Baltic red wood, and that therefore he (Creggan) had allowed the contractor to use larch. He believed he had given permission for this change, in writing. He had himself made out the original specification, but was not then aware that larch could be procured; he did not think it necessary to report the change to the Directors.

Certificate issued by Board requiring Promoters to make good Default.

Copies of the Report were sent to the Grand Jury, the Irish Government, and the memorialising ratepayers, and a certificate was afterwards formally issued to the Company requiring them to make good their default within four months. Eventually the Company informed the Board of Trade that they intended to re-open the line on the 2nd January, 1898, and no objections to such re-opening having been received, further action by the Department was thought unnecessary.

A Certificate of Fitness for Traffic cannot be a Guarantee that a Line will be properly maintained.

It is to be observed that it is now twenty-one years since the line was certified by the Board of Trade to be fit for traffic, and that such a certificate is not and cannot be a guarantee that a line will be properly maintained and the rolling stock in use be kept efficient. In the present case the Order throws upon the County Surveyor the duty of inspecting the line, engines, and rolling stock from time to time, and reporting to the Grand Jury (now County Council).

Board of Trade not concerned with Question of Financial Position of Line.

The question of the financial position of the line is not one with which the Board of Trade are in any way concerned.

Mr. C. WILSON-HARRISON examined by the CHAIRMAN.

Mr. C. Wilson Harrison, Ballinacorney, County Carlow.

Location of Ballinacorney, and distance from railway accommodation.

160 square miles traversed by railway.

Industry of the farmers to market their poultry and dairy produce.

36327. Mr. Harrison, where are you from?—Ballinacorney, which is in the centre of the County Carlow, as you are aware.

36328. What railway accommodation have you?—In Ballinacorney there is none whatever. We have to go five and a half Irish or seven English miles to Oldcastle Station to get to the South, that is to Dublin, and about eleven and a half English miles to Carlow to go to the North. We are about seven miles from Ballinacorney Station, and a very considerable distance further from Kingscourt, so that we have a district, roughly, seventeen by sixteen miles square, without any railway at all. The railway passes to the edge of Carlow and just into it, but in no case traverses the county.

36329. What is your estimate of the population in the area, about?—Well, it would be very difficult to say. It is fairly thickly populated by small farmers, but the population of Ballinacorney itself is about 600.

36330. I mean the area that you mention as being without railway accommodation?—I am afraid I could not give you that, because I could not find the figures.

36331. Are there any industries in that particular area?—Well, no, sir; but a number of small farmers are at a great disadvantage because they have not any cheap mode of transport to send their poultry or eggs or butter or anything of that sort.

36332. And you think that with light railway accommodation they would be able to do this and increase their output?—Undoubtedly, sir, because at Christmas time, when they raise turkeys and geese, in large numbers, buyers come round and they sell them in considerable quantities, and of course the Christmas prices are higher, and they thus admit of the middleman's profit also, but the greater part of the year they are crippled; and also in reference to

fruit. There is another disadvantage I wish to point out, which is this, that much of the local bog is cut away, and the people are using coal for fuel, and in many cases I know it has been drawn twelve miles, from Oldcastle Station, which I need not say is a disadvantage to a small farmer who has perhaps but one cart, and has to borrow his neighbour's in order to get home his winter stock of masts.

36333. Of course if they cart the coal in, everything else that they want that is not produced in the district has to be carted also?—Exactly, sir. I only mentioned coal because it is a bulky article.

36334. What would you estimate the cost of that cartage at?—It is more in time than anything else, and it means great difficulty when men are occupied in getting on the crops. It has to be got in between the hay crop and the oats or else the labour is stopped, or if they wait until later for the coal the price increases as the season advances. Well, there is another disadvantage. Supposing you wanted to carry an animal between Oldcastle and Carlow, it is impossible to do it, practically impossible. You would have to take it nearly to Dublin and to go 160 miles round, roughly speaking. Another thing is that there is great delay in delivery. You get goods sent to Oldcastle Station, and by the time you have been notified by post three days elapse before you can get them home. Then, with regard to commercial travellers coming into the district, the luggage that could be sent by rail for half-a-crown costs fifteen shillings by brake from Oldcastle to Ballinacorney. With regard to fairs and markets there is great difficulty in getting cattle about. By the time you walk them so far they are lowered in price; if you drive them; and in a case recently that I know of, when a bull was taken to Carlow, it took two days by road because it is too heavy to walk the whole of the distance in one day.

38335. May I take it that your object in coming here is to suggest that it is a district entirely requiring railway accommodation?—Yes, sir.

38336. Or some other means of transit?—Well, some other means as a temporary expedient. I see a motor service is suggested. Well, now, motors might be used on different roads, and the best route discovered by that means. Ultimately I advocate a through train service—broad gauge.

38337. Of course, I suppose, you know the district well enough to know that private enterprise could not undertake a railway?—It could not, and another thing is that they would not be willing to give a guarantee, because they are already paying several guarantees.

38338. In other directions?—Yes, the Cavan and Leitrim Railway and the Killybegs to Crossmaglenish.

38339. The dissatisfaction that they have with guarantees would be such that it would be impossible to get the people to agree to another?—It would, sir; not only that, but it discourages them from agitating for the reform that they feel necessary, because they are afraid they would be penalised by the company.

38340. Well, private enterprise not being able to do it, I suppose you think some public department ought to provide it?—I think it should be done, and that there should be State ownership.

38341. Of the whole of the railways?—Yes, sir; and that they should be managed by a local authority, not exactly a local authority, but a national authority elected of law, and of course with power to co-opt experts, as the Education Committee of the London County Council do. It would be essential also that the public should be able to expose their mind on the construction of the railways.

38342. Have you considered this question of State

purchasing?—Yes, sir, I have looked carefully into it, and I have made inquiries from various gentlemen in a position to judge, that have lived in the district for many years.

38343. How long have you lived there?—I have lived there for about two years, and I am constantly going about the district on my work, and of course I hear a good deal of this matter.

38344. And your opinion is that the remedy really lies in the direction of State purchasing?—Yes, sir.

38345. That the management of the railways should be in some Irish authority?—In some Irish authority, probably with money borrowed from the Treasury.

Examined by Mr. ASPINALL.

38346. Why have you selected the route from Oldcastle to Cavan rather than to any other point?—I selected it first of all because, living in the centre of the district, at Ballyjamesduff, I know the great difficulty of getting either north or south, because a gentleman who travels in connection with banks all over Ireland, informs me that it is about the worst in all Ireland, except some parts of Leitrim, and also the people themselves cry out about it.

38347. Have any suggestions been made that a railway should be constructed to connect up Oldcastle, Kingscourt, and Carrickmacross at any time?—Well, not that I am aware of, except so far as that entered into the recent Drogheda proposal.

38348. Is it a difficult country to get through?—Very difficult, the roads being very hilly.

38349. Objections?—You are not an Irishman?—No. There are one or two other points that I want to call attention to.

38350. I think the evidence that you have given is quite clear, and it is quite sufficient for all purposes.

Mr. W. SMITHY examined by the CHAIRMAN.

38351. You appear on behalf of the South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association?—Yes, sir.

38352. Are you engaged in the cattle trade?—Yes, cattle and fairs and shipping business.

38353. Do you export cattle?—No, sir; very little, I trade in home cattle.

38354. Now, what have you got to say with reference to the railway accommodation in the South of Ireland for developing the cattle trade?—Well, until some radical change is effected in the present railway system it is impossible to develop the cattle trade of the South of Ireland to the extent that it should be.

38355. I suppose you are accustomed to send cattle to fairs?—Yes, sir.

38356. And assuming that a fair is held on a Monday, how do you get the cattle there, you have not to send them on the Saturday?—Yes, in some cases we have to send them on Saturday, and leave them on the land all night.

38357. Because there are no convenient trains on Sunday?—We do not send cattle on Sunday at all, sir, never.

38358. Now? Have you a cattle trader's ticket?—Yes, sir. I am a member of the Association, and we have not a cattle trader's ticket. We cannot get a railway ticket—and that is one of the things that we complain of—unless we have a turn-over with the Company of £250 a year.

38359. That is the rule with reference to trader's tickets?—Yes, sir.

38360. Your Association is of opinion that the amount is too high?—We consider it too high, and we consider that for the development of the trade people in the trade more or less should be entitled to return tickets at single fare.

38361. Why should that be given to cattle dealers any more than to any other trade?—Well, sir, we are the chief body for developing the greatest industry in Ireland, and it would be an inducement to them.

38362. There would be more movement of cattle?—More fairs and more movement of cattle if they had more inducement to go. Expenses are very high in connection with the trade.

38363. With regard to the endorsement note that you use for cattle traffic, have you any remarks to make upon that?—Yes, sir.

May 14, 1907.

Mr. G. Wilson-Harries, Ballyjamesduff, County Cavan.

State purchase of the railways and their control by an Irish authority advocated.

Route suggested for the proposed railway through the district.

Mr. G. Smithy, Representative of the South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association.

The Great Southern and Western Companies' cattle owner's risk endorsement note objected to.

The present owners' risk notes quite high enough to cover the risk in transit.

The reduction would ultimately benefit the railways.

The nationalisation of the railways under an Irish authority unanimously advocated by the Association.

The nationalisation of the railways under an Irish authority unanimously advocated by the Association.

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The nationalisation of the railways under an Irish authority unanimously advocated by the Association.

Nov. 14, 1907.
Mr. W. S. Gaskin,
Representative
of the
South of Ire-
land Cattle
Trade Asso-
ciation.

State pur-
chase of the
Irish rail-
ways, and
their control
by an Irish
authority
advised
unanimously
by the
Association.

and that that would be a radical change in the present system under which the railways of Ireland are governed.

38384 And do they favour State purchase?—All are in favour of State purchase.

38385 Worked by an Irish authority?—An Irish authority.

38386 You have read, I suppose, the evidence given by other witnesses on the subject from your district?

—Yes.

38387 And you agree with that?—I agree with the whole of that.

38388 And you say that is the general view of the cattle trade of the South of Ireland?—Of the South of Ireland. One thing I am asked to complain of in connection with our railway system in the South of Ireland. I have some matters, but I do not think at present it is necessary to mention them, because, as with doctors, there is no use in trying to remedy a sore without going to the foundation of it, and it is not necessary to detail the complaints that we have made; but we have several complaints of stock not being delivered in time, and there is a loss owing to the neglect or mismanagement or otherwise of the railway company, and we severely ever get redress or compensation for loss that is proved. Now, sir, that does not apply altogether to the English companies, because there are competing lines, and in several cases where we have made complaints to the English companies, when we can prove a just claim, they generally consider them. That is on account of the competition that exists in England and does not in Ireland. It is solely confined to one company in Ireland, and, consequently, when complaints are made, generally after an endless amount of correspondence and delay, we hear no more of it.

38389 I do not ask you upon that point, because your Association came to the conclusion that the remedy for all these things would be State purchase?—Unquestionably, sir.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON P.O.

38390 With regard to that last question, do you find any difficulty in getting redress in the case of accident to stock when your cattle are carried of the company's risk?—I suppose not, sir.

38391 You know it has been suggested here by several witnesses who gave evidence on behalf of the Cattle Traders' Association that there should be compulsory insurance, that some additional charge for insurance should be compulsory on the railway companies and on the cattle traders, and several witnesses gave evidence on that point; that cattle traders would not object to a reasonable extra charge on the present owner's risk rate being levied by the railway companies, and which would cover the case of all possible risks?—Well, sir, I would not altogether admit that, for this reason, that although I am not an expert I know the inner working of the trade, and I know their turnover, and almost all points, and I do not know any body in existence whose work is so arduous and so difficult, attending five and six fairs in the week, and at the expiration of that time having to encounter the competition of foreign countries and the assistance that their respective Governments in Canada and Australia generally mostly give to their people for placing their produce in the market, that we have to compete against, and our people have not such assistance, and at the end of the time I know that they can make no money by their trade.

38392 Mr. Field, I demand, you recognise as an exponent of your Association?—Yes, sir.

38393 And you remember that some years ago at a meeting they had at the Dublin Society, they drew up recommendations with regard to the cattle trade, and one of the recommendations which was not adopted, but which Mr. Field was very strong in fighting for, was that there should be a low compulsory rate of insurance, and he thought that the cattle dealers would not make any difficulty, you are aware that the railway companies contend that if they carried at owner's risk rates and yet had to give compensation, they would not make anything by it, they could not afford to do it?—I have thought of that a good deal, and various other reasons why the Great Southern Company cannot do better than they are doing in the circumstances, and that they always try to endeavour to pay a dividend to their shareholders; but since Mr. Field made that state-

ment that you refer to, the trade has developed against the interest of the cattle dealers very considerably.

38394 You mean by foreign competition?—By foreign competition and otherwise.

38395 Of course I can quite understand that you would like your cattle to be carried at owner's risk rates, and that the company should be responsible for them?—Quite so, sir; without any extra risk. Of course it is in the interest of the country that we should get the cattle to the market as cheaply as we can.

38396 I am only asking whether you do not think it is impossible for the railway companies to give you this particular concession without increasing their charges by some small percentage?—That is what I believe.

38397 And I gather that you think that unless these railways are put under one unified system that could not be effected?—That is so, sir. I think I have heard on that point that it is unfair to a certain extent to blame under the circumstances the Great Southern and the other railway companies in Ireland for not giving better facilities or cheaper rates to compete with the foreigners, but we must consider that there is a director—and they have officials enough—for every ten miles of railway in Ireland. There are too many high officials, in fact, and it means hindering the trade in general of the country, and leaves the companies in the position that they cannot give us more reduced rates than we have at present. That is the difficulty that we have, to compete with other countries, and they have rates 35 to 40 per cent. less than we have.

38398 On the question whether large concerns could be effected by the abolition of those different boards, probably the economies would not be so large as you anticipate, still if the railways were under one centralised system that would be worked to the interests of the whole community, they could afford to carry the home—or inland traffic—at such a rate as would yield the minimum of profit necessary to cover the cost of carriage, and the interest on the capital cost of construction?—That is quite so.

38399 There is only one other question, as to the value of a motor service between Charleville and other places?—Yes, sir.

38400 We have had evidence to that effect from witnesses who were speaking on behalf of the better industry, and I dare say you know that there was a motor service established there some years ago?—There was, sir, but it was discontinued.

38401 The Great Southern put on a motor service there?—I know, sir, that Rathkale is a very important place in the middle of an agricultural country, and there are a great many large farms there, and I attend them myself regularly, and I have to drive or journey to Rathkale, a distance of eight or nine miles.

38402 You have no knowledge of the motor service in connection with the railway, that was put on by the Great Southern?—No, sir, I have not. It did not apply to the district of Rathkale.

38403 Mr. Leggett?—Was it a rail motor service or a road motor service?

38404 Colonel HUTCHESON P.O.—A road motor service, and they discontinued it because they found that it did not pay. It was largely opposed by the local carters and people of that kind?—Well, I would not say that exactly, because I know the country pretty well, and the country unfortunately lying around there, about twelve square miles, got out of tillage and got into the grazing system, which we condemn so very strongly in Ireland, and we want small holdings of land cultivated and tillage, and if that were the case there would be not only business for a light railway, but for railways within the whole country, and undoubtedly it would pay.

38405 I do not want to go into the grazing question, but with regard to the effect on the cattle trade, I do not agree with you. I think if you were to do away with the grazing districts you would have no market, or a very small market, for the store cattle which are the backbone of the country?—I am of a different opinion altogether.

38406 How would you dispose of your cattle?—The small farmers would produce better cattle. Do you mean that if the grazing lands in Ireland were broken up in small holdings there would not be a market for the store cattle?

The present
profits of the
cattle trade
under it
impossible to
pay rates than
the owner's risk
rates.

Question of a
compulsory
insurance
rate raised by
Mr. Field.

Subsequent
deposition in
cattle trade
owing to
foreign com-
petition.

33996. Not such a good market?—I contend quite the opposite, and I will give you my reasons. I fancy that our small farmers in Ireland, particularly in the South of Ireland, at present owing to the demand would do better.

33997. I think the Chairman considers this as hardly germane to the inquiry. My only point was, and I do not want to follow it up, whether you think that if the grazing farms were broken up into small holdings there would be a great increase of tillage, and in that way there would be increased traffic for the railways?—Yes, sir, quite so; and the small farmers would fatten their cattle on a higher scale

than stores are fattened at present, at nine months instead of two years' old; and besides that, we have an unlimited market in England for our store cattle.

33998. I am afraid you will find that if you did away with the big grazing farms, I won't say all through Ireland, but with some of the big grazing farms in Meath, the small men who sell their cattle would be at the mercy of the English buyers, and would have to sell to them at their own price; I gather, however, that you think that it would lead to increased tillage, and therefore to increased traffic in agricultural and other produce for the railways?—Quite so, sir.

See 16, 1987
—
Mr. W. Sully,
Representative
of the
South of Ire-
land Cattle
Trade Association
The breaking
up of grazing
farms would
increase rail-
way traffic.

Mr. F. J. O'DONOVAN examined by the CHAIRMAN.

33999. You are from Kilkesh?—Yes.

34000. And you appear on behalf of the District Council?—Yes.

34001. Are you a member of the District Council?—Yes.

34002. What are the railways in your district?—The West and South Clare Railways run in connection with the district.

34003. Yes, we have heard a good deal about those Clare railways. What particular points do you wish to bring under our notice in connection with them?—I must say that they are very general on the whole. There is nothing very specific.

34004. Give me the first general point that you want to raise?—That similar rates should be given out of Kilkesh as are given into it for large quantities.

34005. That is to say that if there is a special rate for a large quantity of traffic into Kilkesh, you think that a like special rate for large quantities out should be given?—Yes, sir.

34006. And that has not been done?—That has not.

34007. And that has been applied for?—I understand it has.

34008. And refused?—And refused so far as I understand.

34009. You do not know it of your own knowledge?—I do not know it of my own knowledge.

34010. What is the other point?—The rate on slates from Kilkesh to Kilkesh is 2s. 6d., and the rate from Dublin is 10s. 6d., 200 miles as against 100.

34011. Well, now that is something tangible?—Yes; that is the only thing that I can give you of my own knowledge. That I know in my business.

34012. You think that rate should be considerably reduced?—Considerably reduced.

34013. Now, is that a fancy grievance, or is it a real grievance?—A real grievance.

34014. Slates are brought in from Dublin?—Yes.

34015. And have these been slates brought in from Kilkesh?—Yes, I bring them in myself. I am in the building trade.

34016. And you are speaking from knowledge?—I am speaking from knowledge on that point.

34017. Now, have you represented that to the railway?—I have.

34018. And recently?—No, not recently; not since I sent in this abstract.

34019. That was with reference to the goods traffic?—There are other points in connection with the goods traffic?—A considerable traffic between Kilkesh and Kilkesh and Kilkesh is done by cars.

34020. It is done by cars?—Some of it, because the rates are excessive.

34021. Because of the rates by railway being too high?—Yes.

34022. They can do it cheaper by cars?—Yes.

34023. Now, in regard to passenger arrangements, are they satisfactory?—Very fair, except what is caused by delays and slow travelling.

34024. Have you anything to say about market tickets?—Yes, as to excursion tickets to Kilkesh being issued more frequently and by later trains than they are at present. They are issued by the morning train at 7.30, which would be too early, whereas if they were issued by the 11.15 certainly there would be more people travelling to and from Kilkesh.

34025. Has it a good market?—Oh, Kilkesh has a good market, but in the summer time many people would travel on these cheap tickets and spend the day in Kilkesh, and so on.

33999. Well, I think we have had evidence about the fares and rates from two or three different witnesses. Of course you actually agree with what has been said by all the witnesses, that in the statements of the traders it would be a great advantage if all rates were reduced?—Oh, yes, sir, undoubtedly. That goes without saying.

34002. Well, there are no two opinions about that?—No.

34003. But what about the railway companies?—do you suggest that the loss that is incurred should fall upon the railway companies?—Well, I think it would tend to more traffic, and that it would pay them.

34009. And that they would not lose by it?—Yes.

34010. Do you think that the traffic would increase?—The traffic would increase.

34011. Was not there a subsidised boat and coach service?—Yes.

34012. We had evidence of that?—Kilkesh and Tashert.

34013. Yes, and that has been abandoned, has it?—Yes.

34014. Because it did not pay?—Yes, and the reason that it was broken down was that it was continued during the winter months when there was no connection.

34015. We have also had evidence of the insufficiency of the rolling stock. Do you agree with that?—Oh, yes, that is my chief grievance about it.

34016. You have had personal experience of that?—Oh, yes, personal experience.

34017. And that trade has been injured in consequence of there not being sufficient rolling stock?—Yes, undoubtedly.

34018. Then would you agree with the evidence that we have also had, that it would be an advantage if that line was made into a broad gauge line?—Yes. I have suggested that, too.

34019. You have suggested that?—I have suggested that.

34020. We have also had evidence with reference to the rates that are paid by the district mentioned for those subsidised railways?—Yes, you have had evidence enough on that.

34021. I suppose you have formed no opinion as to whether it would be better for that railway to be absorbed by a larger company and worked by the larger company?—It is the opinion that it would be better for it to be worked by a larger company.

34022. And about all the railways?—About all the railways, that they should be united.

34023. All of them?—All of them.

34024. In the country?—In the country.

34025. Nationalised?—Well, under our management.

34026. And that management Irish management?—Undoubtedly.

Examined by Mr. ASPING.

34027. There is just one little matter here. You speak of the cost of transfer at Kilkesh being a shilling a ton?—Yes, sir.

34028. Are you quite sure that that is so?—That is what I have always heard. I have not heard to the contrary.

34029. Because we had some evidence from Mr. Liversay, of the Donegal Railway, who told us that the cost of transfer to narrow gauge, or vice versa, would be 6d. a ton without adopting some patent appliances that they have on that railway?—We have always heard of a shilling a ton.

Mr. P. J. O'Donovan,
Representative
of the
Kilkesh
Urban Dis-
trict Council.

Increased
traffic to
allow a re-
duction in
rates and
time.

Cause of with-
drawal of the
Kilkesh and
Tashert
steamer and
coach service.

Insufficiency
of rolling
stock on the
West and
South Clare
railways.

Reopening of
the Clare
railways
suggested.

Unification
of the rail-
ways under
the control
of a central
Irish authority
suggested.

The cost of
transfer of
goods at Kilkesh
being a
shilling a
ton.

Nov. 16, 1895.

Mr. P. J. O'Doherty,
Representative
of the
Kilrush
Urban Dis-
trict Council

38450. Do you know was it paid?—We do not know of the cost of transfer except that in the striking of the rates they have provided for it, a ton.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson Pen

38451. At any rate, whether the cost of transfer is 6d. or 1s. a ton, it entails a severe extra cost upon the district, and we have had evidence that it has had the effect in some cases, of deterring traffic from being sent at all!—It has. Quite so.

38452. We have had evidence of a grant of money having been offered by Mr. Balfour for a railway in East Clare. Do you think that if any public money were forthcoming that money would be more profitably spent on converting the West Clare system into a broad gauge?—Yes, that is my opinion.

38453. Then in making another railway?—Yes.

38454. Now, with regard to the point that you have raised about getting specially low rates for large consignments of traffic to inland stations, from Kilrush?—Yes.

38455. They give you a low rate into Kilrush, but when you want to send similar quantities under similar conditions from Kilrush they charge you a higher rate?—Yes.

38456. You are probably aware that you are entitled to exactly the same rates for equal quantities of goods sent under like conditions. If you get fifty tons in and send ten tons out, you cannot expect to get the same rate, but what I understand to be your wish is, that the same rate should apply to similar quantities sent under similar conditions, either in or out?—Yes.

38457. Have you any steamers coming into Kilrush?—Yes, two or three steamers on the river from Loughlinch to Kilrush.

38458. Bringing traffic direct into Kilrush?—The majority of our traffic is all brought direct.

38459. So that Kilrush as a distributing centre would be in a position to send out a considerable volume of consignments?—Oh, undoubtedly. The most of my traffic is from English, Norwegian, and American ports. We distribute them from Kilrush.

38460. And it is to your advantage that Kilrush as a port should get as favorable a rate for goods sent from it, as is given for goods sent to it?—Quite so.

The opening
of Kilrush
in and out
goods rates

Steamer
on river be-
tween Lough-
linch and
Kilrush

Mr. D. Owens,
Representative
of the
Stokestown
Rural Dis-
trict Council

Location of
Stokestown
and distance
from railway
communica-
tion

Injury to
live stock
driven long
distances by
road

The agricul-
tural in-
dustries of
the district
handicapped
by want of
railway
facilities

38476. You appear on behalf of the Stokestown Rural District Council?—Yes, sir.

38477. Where is Stokestown?—It is about the centre of the County Roscommon. It is situated twelve Irish miles from Longford, ten Irish miles from Roscommon, fourteen Irish miles from both Boyle and Castlebar, and about eight or nine miles from Drogheda and Drumina.

38478. Now, are there large fairs held in that place?—Yes, we have had for a number of years very large fairs, but for the want of a railway our cattle have to be driven twelve Irish miles to Longford and about eight or nine miles to Drogheda and Drumina (those are Irish miles), and about ten Irish miles from those fairs to Roscommon. These cattle have to stand in the fair, and when they are driven to the railway station and put on the train on the same day, they are hardly fit for any market either in Dublin or England or Scotland.

38479. They are exhausted?—They are exhausted.

38480. When you speak of cattle, does that include sheep and pigs as well?—Well, it includes them, but of course nobody would face to drive pigs this distance. They have to be carried, but the sheep do have to be driven, and they just suffer in proportion to what the cattle do.

38481. And is there a weekly market for farm produce?—Yes; there is a market on Friday every week.

38482. For agricultural produce?—Yes, for agricultural produce. I suppose every market day about a dozen of cattle come in from Longford for fowl, and those cattle have to be paid for, and it takes the price and upkeep of them and the crates out of the profits of the produce.

38483. Is the land pretty rich land there?—Well, it is medium; some of it is very fair, and some of it is

38461. Now, you said something with reference to slates from Noreagh?—Yes.

38462. I think there are considerable slates quarries there?—Yes.

38463. And slates of very good quality?—Yes.

38464. The effect of a rate, according to you, of 3s. 2d. for 100 miles as against 10s. 6d. from Dublin must be at any rate to handicap the Noreagh industry very considerably?—Oh, it is.

38465. I suppose it has the effect of really helping the other slates?—Helping the foreign slates.

38466. At the expense of the home product?—At the expense of the home product.

38467. Your contention would be that the railway company giving a rate for sea-borne slates of 10s. 6d. for 200 miles, ought to give you a rate of something like 4s. or 5s. for 100 miles for the home product?—Yes.

38468. And that such a rate would help largely to develop that particular industry?—Yes.

38469. With regard to the steamer and coach service, you are aware that that was one of the seven services established under the Act of 1895?—Yes.

38470. For a period of seven years?—Yes.

38471. And that at the end of the seven years the Board of Works had to discontinue them because in every single case they were found to be so unremunerative that they could not afford to run them longer?—They were found to be unremunerative in this case, because of being continued during the winter, there being no connection at all.

38472. One would imagine that after one year's working they would have had no need of further experience to guide them, so that I can hardly understand a public department keeping on that seven year after year. It is very extraordinary?—Very extraordinary.

38473. But apart from that, do you think that those services were ever rightly placed?—I have only knowledge of that service.

38474. Do you think that this was a service that would be remunerative if properly conducted?—I should think so for the three months of summer.

38475. Is that a district in which a motor service would be attended with better results perhaps than a coach service?—Yes, and they have been agitating for it for some time.

MR. D. OWENS EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN

what I would call light land that is fairly good for crops.

38484. Then, is the agriculture that exists in that district improving or declining?—Well, it cannot improve for the want of a railway, because my experience goes back, I suppose, to thirty-five years, and I can tell you safely that it has very much deteriorated during that period.

38485. And many of the population have emigrated?—A good many of the young people have had to emigrate because the tillage or farm produce has to be carted now. It has to be carted to Longford.

38486. You speak of your thirty-five years of knowledge and experience. At any time during that period has any promise or application been made for a grant of money for a railway?—Well, we have at one time got a guarantee from the County of Roscommon and the County of Leitrim to make a connection with Drogheda, and it has gone so far as to be brought before the Privy Council in the year 1885, and through a small technicality the application was thrown out. The technicality was that all the directors of the scheme were appointed by the Grand Jury, whereas the Privy Council held that a proportion of them should have been appointed by the shareholders when the shareholders should have taken up the work.

38487. Under the guarantee?—Under the guarantee.

38488. Do you see any likelihood now of the people in this district agreeing to join in a guarantee?—Well, from the great difficulty of meeting rates and rents, occasioned by foreign competition, because I have a very good knowledge of all that, it would be impossible to ask farmers and landowners for a guarantee.

38489. And therefore if any railway is to be made it must be done by public funds?—Yes, sir.

38490 Of some sort?—Yes. Another thing our country suffers from is that hay is very often wanting for export, but I have known several cases where a load goes out carts are employed to cart it to Longford, and it must be thrown down there again to be pressed, and that is a great disadvantage to our district. At one time we had a new butter market in this town, and it has all died away for want of a railway. Now the butter is put up by small people who do not put it up so well, and they take it away themselves.

38491 And do you think that the district could be galvanised into life, as it were, if a railway were made?—I have not the slightest doubt that it could.

38492 Have your Council considered the nationalisation of the railways?—Well, I cannot assert that they have, but I know that they all think that something must be done if the country is to go on and prosper at all.

38493 Well, something should be done, you say. Should it be done in that direction?—I could not answer that. I have not any grievance against any railway; I think the localities having railways must put up with little grievances occasionally, but we have a grievance outside the management of railways. We have no railways at all. That is one great grievance, and it is felt in the locality severely.

38494 In every direction?—In every direction. I myself send stock away occasionally that is raised, but I could not undertake the journey that I spoke about. I have perhaps to give two days to what ought to be done in one. Of course, if I had to pay along the route sending off my stock it would deter me from sending them. That everybody feels, every person that raises a beast or has ever been in need or want of a railway. I know myself that several buyers have come to come to our farm for the want of a railway. They say that our stock are unavailable when they are put on the market, and when they do come they try to buy them at a price that will perhaps recoup them. They say, "We will run no risk at this price," so that I am sure that everybody acknowledges that as the reason of agriculture having suffered for this circumstance. With regard to the nationalisation of railways, I think the experience of what the Post Office has done for us with regard to the lines of telegraph is a guide, and I have not the slightest doubt that something in the same manner could be done with the railways.

Examined by Colonel HURCHESSON P.C.

38495 Am I right in saying that Strakestown is the centre of a very considerable cattle-rearing district?—You are quite right.

38496 And that the contention of the people of that district is that if that branch line of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway had been in the first instance owned by Roscomber to Strakestown it would have resulted in a very largely increased traffic on that branch?—There is no question about it.

38497 In other words, owing to that branch having stopped short at Droghda, all this district was deprived of the natural advantages and development which it was intended to bring about?—There is no question about that, sir.

38498 At the time that the offer of the £24,000 was made to the Cavan and Leitrim Railway, and

was rejected by the County Leitrim, I think the people were strongly in favour of an alternative route?—Yes, and the people in Strakestown applied for that £24,000 that was rejected by the Leitrim Grand Jury.

38499 Yes; I understood that that was so?—Yes.

38500 At any rate, the cattle-rearing people of that district are now obliged to drive their animals a considerable distance along the road to put them on the train at Longford or Roscomber. Longford and Roscomber or Droghda Railway Station are, I believe, a distance of ten to twenty miles from Strakestown?—Well, there is no station that you mention that would be ten miles. They all exceed it.

38501 Fifteen to twenty?—Yes.

38502 With the natural result of a considerable loss of condition to the beasts, and reduced prices to the farmer?—Yes; and then again he charges coming into Strakestown for bringing feeding stuffs and other things, it almost deprives us of the advantage.

38503 Yes, and feeding stuffs, which are essential, of course, to your industry, are very high in cost owing to the railway being so far away?—From the nearest station six and upwards, and perhaps 10s.; and even then, after being at the railway station, we may often have to wait a week before we can get them.

38504 I gather from what you may say that as the want of any grant of public money being available for this particular district, you are afraid that, through the advantage of the railway would be considerable, the County Council will not be prepared to guarantee anything towards it?—I am quite sure that if things were more prosperous, and the prices of cattle and farm produce were rising, they would not object, but with the present prices and how they are cut they could not possibly add any more taxation to themselves.

Examined by MR. ASHFIELD.

38505 Does the cattle trade from your district mainly go to England or Scotland?—Well, to both places.

38506 To which does the great majority go?—I should say that perhaps the majority goes to Scotland.

38507 You know that according to the agricultural returns the export of cattle from nearly all the Irish ports has been decreasing?—Yes.

38508 Now, is not that due to American competition, importing beef into England?—Well, I have not the slightest doubt about it, because I have seen some cattle sold in Butcher's, both dead and alive, and I think it is impossible for us, paying as much as we do of rents and rates, to compete with them at all.

38509 Do you think that if the railway rates were reduced very considerably, say 50 per cent., that would enable you to prevent the importation of American cattle into England?—It would to a very great extent.

38510 You still think there is some hope for the Irish cattle trade?—I have not the slightest doubt that there is, because I think that with improved breeding in Ireland we have better cattle, and we will send off much better cattle than we have sent, and then that they will be up to maturity earlier.

MR. JOSE O'FARRELL EXAMINED BY THE CHAIRMAN.

38511 You are also from Strakestown?—Yes.

38512 And you are also a member of the Rural District Council?—I am a member of the Strakestown Rural District Council and of the Roscomber County Council.

38513 Now, have you been in the town during the time Mr. Owens gave his evidence?—Yes, sir.

38514 Do you agree with what he said?—Yes.

38515 Have you anything to add to it that he has omitted?—Well, no, except one matter.

38516 You agree with it generally?—Yes, except that there is just one item, that is fuel.

38517 Just take that item. What about fuel?—Fuel has become very scarce in and around Strakestown.

38518 Do you mean bog fuel?—Yes. In fact, in a few years hence it will be very difficult for its removal to procure any at a reasonable price, and in view of the likelihood of a number of the large grazing farms in the union being divided into smaller holdings it is a matter of serious consideration for intending occupiers. The only solution of this problem would be the extension of a line of railway from Droghda, which, of course, would not only mean the development of the Arigna mines and bring increased traffic to the Cavan and Leitrim Railway, but would leave cheap fuel at the doors of the people of Strakestown and surrounding districts. The Right Hon. the O'Connor Don, when giving evidence recently before the Royal Commission on Congestion, expressed his opinion in favour of railway communication with Strakestown. There are letters on the subject from the Hon. Mr. Richard Nugent, Chairman of the Midland Great Western Railway, and letters also from the

Nov. 24, 1907.

Mr. D. Owens, Representative of the Strakestown Rural District Council.

The cattle industry of Strakestown District severely handicapped by its want of railway facilities.

The district too poor to undertake the burden of a guarantee.

The export cattle trade of the district.

A substantial reduction in cattle rates necessary to help the Irish trade to fight American competition in England.

Mr. John O'Farrell, Representative of the Strakestown Rural District Council.

The advantages of an extension of railway from Droghda to Strakestown.

Nov. 18, 1905.

Mr. John O'Farrell, Representative of the Strabane Rural District Council.

Letter from the Honorable Richard Nugent (Chairman of the Midland Great Western Railway) in the Strabane district.

Cavan and Leitrim Railway people in connection with the railway which you can see. And there are also the returns of the fairs.

38519. We have got all that, but I think the principal features in connection with both your and Mr. Owens' evidence, as far as we are concerned are as much as we require unless you wish to read any particular letter. Is there any particular letter then that you wish to read?—Well, with your permission, I will read the letter of Mr. Richard Nugent—"I wrote to the Board, Dublin, 1st December, 1905. Rev. and dear Sir,—Your letter of yesterday's date has just reached me, and all you state about Strabane requiring railway accommodation I know of my own knowledge is but too true. I am glad to hear that a movement is on foot to enlist the sympathy of the Chief Secretary, and I doubt if in all Ireland he could bestow public money on a better cause. No doubt, as you say, a line from Drumma would serve the purpose, and I have consulted our engineers and manager, and they both consider that that line would be less expensive and physical difficulties much less considerable. Our Board meets next Thursday, when your letter will be submitted to them. I am, Rev and dear Sir, yours faithfully, Richard A. Nugent."

38520. Who is that addressed to?—To the late Canon Gahly, who took a great interest in the matter.

38521. That is a rather important letter?—There is a letter also from Mr. Duggan, of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway.

38522. Read that, too?—Cavan and Leitrim Railway Company, Limited, Secretary's Office, 37 College Green, Dublin, 2nd January, 1906. Dear Sir,—Mr. Duggan has submitted to the Board the correspondence which he has had with you with reference to an extension of railway communication with Strabane. This company has always been most anxious to see an extension of the line westward, and, as you are aware, they are now promoting a line from Drogheda to Roskeel. In the event of your extending this line from Roskeel to Strabane the directors will be prepared to give you every assistance to obtain a Government grant for the line, and when the line is completed they will be prepared to work it on as favourable terms as possible. The advantage you will have in joining our line is that we are a light railway, which will cost you much less than a wide gauge.—Yours faithfully, R. R. STEWART, Rev. Canon Gahly, Strabane.

38523. Now, Mr. O'Farrell, just read the resolution of your Council on the subject?—Resolution of Strabane Rural District Council, 30th March, 1906:—"That we respectfully and urgently press on the attention of the Chief Secretary, the Right Hon. James Bryce, M.P., and of the Under-Secretary, the Right Hon. Sir A. P. MacDonnell, the pressing need of inquiring by a competent Government expert as to establishing needful railway communication for Strabane and the vast area around it with some adjacent railway."

38524. Now read, if you please, the reply of the Irish Office?—Irish Office, Old Queen-street, S.W., 25th May, 1906. Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter of 19th May, the Chief Secretary directs me to say that he will make inquiries on the question of railway communication with Strabane, and will ascertain the views of the Board of Works on the representation of the Grandjura.—Yours faithfully, W. R. Davies.

38525. That is May, 1906?—Yes.

38526. And there the question rests?—There the question rests.

38527. Nothing has been done?—No, sir, nothing has been done since.

Examined by Colonel Hutchinson P.O.

Extract of traffic from Strabane fairs.

38528. I see the returns you have given here show that of four of your fairs the average sales amount to about 6,000 cattle and 2,000 sheep. Those are the fairs for which returns are taken, but for the most important of your fairs there are no returns taken. Would you say that the sales of cattle at the other fairs on which there are no returns taken, would be equal to or exceed those numbers?—I would, because our March and April fairs are very large, and our September fair is a very large sheep fair.

38529. That would mean a sale of something like 12,000 or 13,000 cattle and 5,000 or 6,000 sheep in the year?—Yes.

38530. The bulk of the cattle and sheep are sent to England and Scotland?—England and Scotland.

38531. By the railway?—By the railway, and shipped to England and Scotland.

38532. Via Belfast?—Via Belfast and Dublin.

38533. According to your statement the cattle sales have decreased in the last six years by nearly 30 per cent?—Yes, 7,000 to 5,000.

38534. There has not been a similar decrease in sheep; and, of course, this takes account of fairs at which no bids are taken?—No account.

38535. And that very serious decline you attribute to objection raised by buyers that the cattle reach the railway in not as perfect condition as they wish?—Yes, I can give evidence of well-known buyers who ceased to attend.

38536. I gather from the reply that you have received from Mr. Richard Nugent, the chairman of the Midland Great Western, that his company was favourable and perfectly willing to promote the line in every way they could, but that owing to their financial difficulties, in which we all know they are now or was, they were not in a position to construct the line at their own expense?—Quite so.

38537. Mr. Nugent, as I am sure, you remember, has taken a great interest in the development of the cattle traffic. He is largely interested in it himself, and I know that he considers it most important for the railway, and I am sure that his company would give you every assistance if they were in a position to do so. Is not that your opinion?—Yes, that is my opinion.

38538. Owing to the company not having large funds at their back they cannot do it. I think you said in your evidence that you would prefer a connection with Drogheda?—With Drogheda.

38539. In that way you would get an alternative connection with the Midland or with the Cavan and Leitrim?—Yes.

38540. Whereas if the connection was with Drogheda I presume most of the traffic would go by the Midland?—Yes.

38541. And naturally you would like the advantage of competition?—Yes; and the cattle would have to be re-loaded at Drogheda, which would be a great inconvenience to people sending cattle by that route.

38542. Has any action been taken to give effect to the Chief Secretary's reply of last year; do you know if any further action has been taken by the Irish Office?—No, there has been no action taken.

38543. Or any communication with the Board of Works by the Irish Office?—No.

38544. As to doing anything in connection with the extension of the railway?—I am not aware of anything.

Mr. Owens (question witness).—The reason of that is on account of this Commission being appointed, we took no part.

38545. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—You did not follow it up?

Mr. Owens.—We did not follow it up. And there is another matter I would be very glad to mention. In spring an English buyer was in our town, and bought a certain number of pigs, and he succeeded in getting the majority of them at a low price, but he had to pay as much as ten shillings a cart, and that buyer has refused to come to us again.

38546. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—Your pig traffic has declined very largely?—Yes, and will decline by reason of the difficulty of getting pigs taken to Drogheda.

38547. Mr. Appinoff.—Which of these two proposals does your district favour. One is to connect Strabane with the Midland broad-gauge line, and the other to connect it with the Cavan and Leitrim narrow-gauge line. Which proposal does your district want?—Well, they want either. We are so badly off that we would gladly take either, but as a choice we would take the Cavan and Leitrim.

38548. Chairman.—The narrow gauge.

38549. Colonel Hutchinson P.O.—He has just stated that by taking Drogheda he gets an alternative route. He can go either by the Cavan and Leitrim or the Midland. If that is the reason we would prefer the Drogheda route.

Mr. R. C. WILLIAMS, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

38549 Mr. WILLIAMS, you are a Justice of the Peace?—Yes.

38550 And you are connected with the Macroom Urban District Council?—I am.

38551 Are you a member of that Council?—Yes.

38552 Do you live in the district?—Yes.

38553 Are you interested in the district?—Yes. I am a hotel proprietor and a large farmer.

38554 What is the point that the Macroom Urban District Council wish to bring under our notice?—Our chief disadvantage is this—We have a little line twenty-four miles long—

38555 That is the Cork and Macroom, is it not?—Yes. One mile from the city of Cork it runs parallel with the Cork and Brandon line, within twenty yards of it. There was a station some time ago to connect all the railways in the South of Ireland, and it would be a decided advantage to us if this connection were made.

38556 That is at Cork?—No, where the two railways practically meet; they run within twenty yards of each other within a mile of the station. It was at one time used with the terminus at the Brandon station, but the directors fell out, and they have become separate. But the real disadvantages point from our point of view is that it is about a mile and a half from the centre of the city, and it costs us about 1s a ton to cart our stuff from the goods terminus to any part of the city either by steamer or by the Great Southern and Western Railway. Cattle are similarly situated; the people have to drive their stock right through the city, whereas if this connection were made they could run right down to the deep water.

38557 The connection would have the further advantage of enabling you to have through rates?—Yes. We have no forward bookings at all now; the railway companies refuse to give them. If we want to book our stuff to England or Scotland we have to wait a week or ten days before the reply comes back as to the amount of carriage it would cost us; consequently we cannot sell fish, we cannot send game or anything of that sort. Then there is another matter. There are several valuable lime kilns on our line, and it would be an advantage to the farmers on the Brandon line if they could get a siding made in such a way that it would run into the Brandon line, the gauges are the same, and the farmers of West Cork could then get the advantage of using our line.

38558 If all these advantages could be got by a connection with the Cork and Brandon line, why have not the Cork and Macroom taken it in hand?—They were about it eight months ago, but it fell through. I do not think you will have an amalgamation except completely, unless the State purchase all the lines.

38559 You are in favour of that?—There is another matter. We would like to have concessions for large quantities. We have no concessions whatever. Whether we send 100 or 4,000 tons in a year we have to pay the same as a man who sends one ton, whether it is coal, coke, or any other sort of commodities. We think that large traders should have a concession in the way of getting reduced rates for large quantities.

38560 For large quantities sent at the same time?—Yes.

38561 That is done on other railways?—It is, but we get no facilities whatever that way.

38562 Have you represented that to the Cork and Macroom Company?—I am sure that they have been asked for it; it has been refused. I think I know they give it to one gentleman on coal. I know they refused to do it some years ago, and one man in the town carted all his stuff from Chichester. I am not sure whether any application has been made since. There is another matter I wish to bring before you, and that is that the traders of the county are suffering from the immense inconvenience caused by the bad system of goods traffic. We have no goods train leaving Cork after ten o'clock in the day. If we want to order any stuff we have to order it two days in advance. If I order stuff today I cannot get it for forty-eight hours; but if they had a goods train running about two or three o'clock we would be in a position to get goods ordered the day before. That

is a very serious disadvantage from the traders' point of view.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHINSON, P.M.

38563. Am I right in saying that owing to a difference of opinion between the directors of the Cork and Macroom Railway and the directors of the Cork and Brandon Railway some years ago, the Cork and Macroom people went to very great expense, and built a station a mile away on the top of a hill?—They did.

38564. And involved their company in very large expenditure with practically no benefit at all, except that of sparing the other company?—None whatever. It is a fine place, and could be used as a hospital; it would not be thrown away at all.

38565. But it is useless as a railway station, is it not?—Yes.

38566. And the first purpose of a railway station is to serve the railway?—To our mind, they only serve themselves.

38567. At any rate, it is an object lesson of the disadvantage attending a number of small companies, whose interests are not always identical?—It is.

38568. Which would disappear if—I will not say the whole network of railways in Ireland, but if the nine or ten small lines in Cork, at any rate, were in the hands of a central body?—Yes.

38569. The difficulty would disappear?—It would be a great facility.

38570. I gather that even apart from the general question of centralisation, you would favour the amalgamation of such small lines?—So we would.

38571. Even if you could not get the whole of the railways amalgamated you would certainly advocate the control of the railways in South Cork being put in the hands of the Cork and Brandon?—Certainly, provided we got sufficient representation.

38572. Naturally. But I gather that you do not think there is much prospect of that amalgamation under any voluntary arrangement?—I fear not. That has been discussed, and the directors have disagreed.

38573. On the question of terms, I suppose?—I believe so—yes. There is a large fair on our district—one of the largest in the South of Ireland. We are in a purely agricultural district; and the idea of the bridge, if we were in connection with the Cork and Brandon, would put us in such a position that we could look out from our station to England or Scotland.

38574. But even if the bridge is made it will be of no benefit to you, situated as your station is?—Not a bit.

38575. That is a very strong argument in favour of something being done. I think we have had evidence contradictory of what you say as to your railway serving a large agricultural district, and the disadvantage of being unable to get through rates; for instance, with regard to the Cork and Muskerry line, we heard yesterday that owing to the difficulty of getting lime from your system to them the farmers cannot get the benefit which they ought to get?—They lose it, a ton.

38576. And that seriously handicaps the agricultural development of the district?—Yes.

38577. It seems a strange thing that there should be no goods train after 10 o'clock in the morning from Cork?—We have no goods train leaving Cork after 10 o'clock.

38578. (Chairman.)—Ten o'clock in the morning?—Yes. If we want to get stuff the following day we have to wait for it. We have made application to the Board with reference to the matter, but I do not know whether it has been before them or not. It is quite recently we have done so.

38579. Colonel Hutchinson, P.M.—You have made application recently?—Yes.

38580. You cannot say what the result of that will be?—No.

38581. The line is a good well-paying line?—Yes.

38582. It serves a prosperous district and it is one of the best paying and most economically worked lines in Ireland?—It is. We have got very good passenger traffic, and since the old management we have got special excursion rates, which are most advantageous both for tourist traffic and the rest.

Nov 10, 1907

Mr. R. C. WILLIAMS, J.P., Representative of the Macroom Urban District Council.

The inconvenient situation of the Cork Terminus at the Macroom Railway.

Caused by dispute with the London Railway Company.

The amalgamation of the small railways south of the river Lee with the Cork and Brandon Railway suggested.

The proposal to bridge over the Lee would be of no use to the Macroom Railway unless the latter be connected with the Cork and Brandon lines.

Complaint as to goods train not leaving Cork.

The Cork and Macroom Railway a prosperous and well managed line.

Examined by Mr. ARDILL.

Nov 16, 1907.

Mr. A. C. Williams, J.P.,
Representative
of the
Macroom
Urban Dis-
trict Council.

Complaint
as to the
facilities for
getting cattle
from Cork to
Macroom.

The passenger
traffic hands
crippled owing
to want of
through con-
nections.

Mr. James J.
Auld, J.P.,
Representative
of the Maryborough
Town Com-
missioners.

Complaint as
to inadequate
facilities for
goods traffic at
Maryborough
Station.

Proposition is
advanced that
the Great Canal
to Mary-
borough.

Not supported
by Great Jury.

38583. The proportion of working expenses is something like 56 per cent. as against 62 per cent. for the whole of Ireland, so that in that respect they ought to be in a position to give you increased facilities. It is not like a poor company who can say, "It will not pay us to do it"; they are in a very strong position, and that is a further argument in favour of their doing something for you!—We get no live stock after tea o'clock, except by paying a rate and a half for it.

38584. Chairman.—That is by passenger train?—Yes. If we want to take advantage of the cattle sales in Cork we have to leave the cattle there overnight at pay a rate and a half. That is unfair. We ought to be in a position to have them there, from a town like ours, situated as we are, just as cheaply or at ordinary rates.

38585. Colonel Fitzhugh Poe.—You have mentioned in your abstract of evidence the want of through connection with the South of England by the Rosslare route?—If we had that connection we would do a great deal in the sporting line. Our tenants are purchasing their holdings, they are all preserving them, and the consequence would be, if the thing were done, that our country would be just as wealthy as Scotland as regards sporting. Our preserves would be just as good in a sporting way as those of Scotland.

38586. But this want of through connection handicaps your passenger traffic?—Yes.

Mr. JAMES J. AULD, J.P., examined by the CHAIRMAN.

38595. Mr. Auld, you are a Justice of the Peace, and you appear on behalf of the Maryborough Town Commissioners?—Yes.

38596. Of which body you are a member, I suppose?—Yes.

38597. Are you engaged in trade in Maryborough?—Yes; I am a general trader.

38598. Therefore you have a good deal to do with the railways?—Yes.

38599. The Great Southern serves your district?—Yes, altogether.

38600. I will ask you a few general questions. Are you satisfied with the railway management at your place generally?—No, we are not.

38601. Will you tell us what you have to complain of?—We have had to complain in the past very much. Before the Great Southern Railway got the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway the loading and unloading accommodation at the station was very bad?—It was altogether insufficient.

38602. You mean for goods traffic?—Yes. It was a frequent thing for the traders to have their men able to do only half a day's work instead of a whole day's work in consequence of the congestion of the goods store; they could not get their goods. The Commissioners called the attention of the Company to this several times on behalf of the traders, but no notice was taken of it; until they got the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway there was nothing done by them.

38603. How does the getting of that railway affect the matter?—They transferred the goods store up to where the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway had their goods store, and they have been using the store of the other company, which has better accommodation.

38604. Then that particular complaint has been partially rectified?—It has been partially remedied. The complaints were so acute that on one occasion the traders took the matter up with a view to getting the Canal Company, which comes within about five miles of us, to make a cutting to us; representations were made for that purpose.

38605. In competition with the railway?—Yes. The grievance was so acute. The Canal Company were agreeable to do it, but when the matter came before the Grand Jury, some of the jurors through whose land the cutting was proposed to be made objected, and the Grand Jury at the matter go by default; they did not give us any support in the matter, and it had to be there.

38606. At any rate, I understand you to say that since the acquisition of the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway the lack of accommodation for goods

38587. With regard to the new railway which is being made connecting the Great Southern and Western and the other lines—that is the name of it?—The Cork City Railway.

38588. Is that intended to connect with the Cork and Brandon?—Yes.

38589. But not with the Cork and Macroom?—No; they have no power to connect with the Cork and Macroom. But if the amalgamation of the Cork and Brandon and the Cork and Macroom were made it would run as down to the Brandon terminus, where we would be connected with all the railways in the South of Ireland.

38590. But at present there is no direct connection with the Cork and Macroom?—None whatever.

38591. That intended line is only for goods traffic, is it not?—Passenger and goods.

38592. Is it intended to run passenger trains through the streets of Cork?—Yes.

38593. Do you hope that there will be passenger trains run off the Cork and Brandon through the streets of Cork on to the Great Southern and Western?—Yes; I think that that is the intention.

38594. Chairman.—What is the population of Macroom?—3,019; that is the urban population.

traffic has been remedied?—Yes, but on several occasions the Town Commissioners have had to take the matter up with them, and notwithstanding the resolutions of the Commissioners nothing was done by them. I only bring that up to show that the Great Southern and Western Company are not amenable to local opinion at all.

38607. Let us see what that local opinion is. First of all, tell us who are the Town Commissioners; are they in place of the borough council?—It is just the same as an urban district council.

38608. You say that the Town Commissioners have had this matter under consideration?—Yes.

38609. The question of railway facilities at your place?—Yes.

38610. Have they had a meeting recently on the subject?—Recently, so.

38611. Within the last ten years?—There was one in June, 1907.

38612. Did they pass any resolution then?—Yes.

38613. You may read that resolution?—"Resolved, that owing to the considerable increase of coal, timber, and other goods daily conveyed by the Great Southern and Western Railway into Maryborough station, the limited space allotted the public for the removal of their consignments causes delay, loss of time, and cash to our several traders." Nothing was done on that resolution, and three years later they passed another resolution, or rather, a meeting was held at which it was ordered "that our clerk ask the directors of the Great Southern and Western Railway have they any notion of bettering in any shape the existing accommodation at the Maryborough station the ground for loading and unloading the goods traffic." No notice was taken of that at all. There was nothing done until some time later when they got the other store to which I have referred.

38614. When they acquired the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway?—Yes. The store which they have got from the Waterford line runs to the end of the street; the wall is quite low to the street; there is about three and a half or four feet of wall between the street and the railway wagons. The public have complained that there is not proper protection for goods, particularly coal in open wagons, and we have at least once drawn their attention through the Town Commissioners to the matter, but they have done nothing. The Town Commissioners passed that resolution—"We would respectfully draw the directors' attention to the further want of a more convenient office which could be erected at the end of the store near the public road; also to the

advantage of having a house erected there to accommodate the principal official in that department, and thus prevent the present system of petty larcenies in or about the goods store."

36515. That is an open ground, is it?—Yes. There have been one or two prosecutions, and we have called their attention to the fact that coal has been taken, but no protective wall has been put up by them since.

36516. Is there no fencing?—There is merely a low wall.

36517. What do you call a low wall?—It would be about four feet in height.

36518. Children could get over it?—Yes, and there are others to facilitate the officials going in and out.

36519. What you suggested was that there should be an office or somebody on the spot to prevent these petty larcenies?—Yes. Now they have got that store, our application for remedying grievances as just as before; when we want further accommodation we find it very difficult to move the Railway Company at all. The Great Southern and Western Railway is a very big company; they have a monopoly of our trade, and we find it very difficult to get anything done by them at all.

36520. I think that is quite enough about facilities. Now about rates, what have you to say about the relief?—We consider that the rates are rather high.

36521. As compared with what they ought to be?—Yes. I will give you an instance. The country round about is an agricultural country; it is practically all tillage country; and in our town we have Messrs. Janssen, buying barley, Mr. Robert Gibney has large maltings there, Messrs. O'Brien are extensive millers, and there are also a number of small corn buyers. The fact is that Maryborough is a good centre for collecting, and there are some adjoining places which find that Maryborough is a very much better place for marketing their corn than perhaps their own place is. A short time ago there was a big consignment—I have the dockets here—from Mountmellick, which is only seven miles from Maryborough, and the rate charged on that 24-ton lot was 2s. 5d. a ton. The rate from Maryborough is Dublin for a quantity of six tons would be 5s. 6d.

36522. What is the distance?—It is a distance of fifty miles. So that for seven miles the charge was nearly 80 per cent. of the charge for fifty miles.

36523. That the wagon would be occupied just as long in the one case as in the other?—If it was a question of the length of time the wagon would be occupied the charge might be reasonable.

36524. But the wagon is the earning power of the Company?—But there is another thing—

36525. Do you suggest a rule-of-three sum—if fifty miles cost 5s. 6d., what should seven miles cost, is that the way you would work it out?—I would not see anything unreasonable in it. The man who sent that corn from Mountmellick station did all the loading of it into the wagon; the Company merely said, "There is the wagon," and the consignor had to put all the goods into the wagon.

36526. In both cases, whether at Dublin or the other place?—I am not speaking of Dublin; I am speaking of Mountmellick, the local place.

36527. But in both cases the service would be done by the consignor?—Yes, the loading would be done by the consignor and the unloading by the buyer, so that as far as labour is concerned it does not cost the Company anything.

36528. But 2s. 5d. for seven miles does not seem to me to be an excessive rate. What would you suggest that that rate ought to be?—I would say that is a ton for seven miles would pay for large lots. It is only seven miles of a run, and it would not cost the company anything except the use of their wagons for half an hour. It would not be half an hour running from one place to the other.

36529. In running, of course, it would not be more?—You see the disadvantage to the man who has within seven miles of a good corn course. Although he is quite handy at it is really of no advantage to him so far as the railway is concerned. He is handicapped in such a way that, as it is only 2s. 4d. more, he will send the whole of the corn to Dublin and put it on the exchange.

36530. Well, you have given your view, but I do not think the rate of 2s. 5d. at all unreasonable.

There is accommodation to be provided at the two places, whether they are seven or fifty miles apart, by the railway company?—The railway company is supposed to have plenty of accommodation for all the traffic they can get.

36531. At any rate, we have your opinion upon the matter. You think that the rate should be strictly in proportion to the 5s. 6d.—at any rate, that it should be less than 2s. 5d.?—It should be.

36532. That is what you mean?—Yes. Notwithstanding the fact that the Company would in this particular instance drop is 5d. a ton if they made the rate 1s., it would undoubtedly be made up for by the increased amount of traffic that would be sent.

36533. To Maryborough?—Yes.

36534. Can you give us another instance?—The rate to Ballybruck, which is another station lower down, about eighteen miles, is 2s. 6d. a ton. We consider that rate high.

36535. That is for a distance of about eighteen miles?—Yes.

36536. I am assuming that these miles are the same as ours—that they are English miles?

Mr. Fettes.—Yes, English miles.

36537. Chairman.—You have given us English miles, have you not?—I do not think it would be more by rail than seven English miles from Mountmellick.

36538. They are English miles, not Irish miles?—It is Irish miles I have in my mind, but the railway miles are English miles.

36539. Is there any traffic in basic slag from Dublin?—There is, and it is a growing traffic.

36540. What is the rate?—4s. 10d. a ton from Dublin.

36541. When you get it at Maryborough do you distribute it to other places?—Yes.

36542. How do the rates compare again there?—I took out this case with regard to Portlanning. I sent to Portlanning three tons of basic slag; the distance from Maryborough is nine or ten miles, and I was charged a rate of 3s. 5d. per ton, which works out relatively to the 4s. 10d. at nearly 75 per cent. of the Dublin rate for 20 per cent. of the distance.

36543. Is that loaded by the Company?—No, the Company do not do any loading or unloading. As a matter of fact, from what I know of our local station, the station is undermanned from a labour point of view.

36544. With regard to through rates, have you any traffic coming at a through rate from England to Maryborough?—We have a great deal.

36545. Will you give us one instance of what you consider a reasonable or an unreasonable rate, wherever you like. Have you a rate which in your judgment is reasonable. For instance, the rate for grain and feeding stuffs, does not that appear to you to be reasonable?—I think it is a reasonable rate.

36546. From Liverpool to Maryborough?—Yes. But when I consider that it goes five or six miles further on to Mountmellick at a lower rate, I begin to think that it ought to be something less.

36547. Give us the rate from Liverpool to Maryborough for feeding stuffs?—For oil-cake it was 12s. 3d., and for other feeding stuffs 13s. 10d.

36548. That is through Dublin?—No; the 12s. 3d. rate would be via Waterford.

36549. And thence by rail?—Yes, by the Great Southern line.

36550. Then there is pollard and bran?—12s. 10d.

36551. The same way, via Waterford?—Yes. But no matter which way it comes, whether via Dublin or via Waterford, it has to go five miles further to get to Mountmellick, and if it is carried that five miles further on the rate becomes less—it is 11s. 9d. and 12s. 6d. The reason of that is that the Canal Company run into Mountmellick, and of course, if the people were getting their goods via Dublin they could have them consigned to Dublin to come by canal.

36552. All the way?—All the way.

36553. And that is the reason of the difference in the rate?—I believe that that is the reason.

36554. There is no doubt about it?—Then I deal in slates as well.

36555. Are there local slate quarries?—Yes, and we get Welsh slates also, but not from Wales; we get them from Dealans in Dublin.

No. 12, 1907.

Mr. James J. Auld, J.P., Representative of the Maryborough Town Commissioners.

Complaints as to excessive goods rates—given from Maryborough to Ballybruck.

Basic slag from Maryborough to Portlanning (cost of proportion to the Dublin rate).

Feeding stuffs from Liverpool to Maryborough (compared with the rate to Mountmellick.)

Slates, brought to Maryborough.

Nov 16 1897.

Mr. James J. And, s.c.,
Representative
of the
Marryborough
Town Com-
missioners.

Complaint as
to excessive
goods rates—
no.

Slates, Nenagh
to Mary-
borough (com-
pared with the
rates for Welsh
slates from
Dublin)

38556. Where are the Irish slates from?—We get them from Killaloe quarries; they are put on at Nenagh station. I do not know the exact mileage from Nenagh to Maryborough, but I think it would be something about thirty or thirty-five miles.

Mr. Taffee.—It is forty-five miles.

Witness.—I said that I did not know the exact mileage, but I did not think it was quite so much as that.

38557. Chairman.—I have it here as forty-five miles. I did not think it was such a long distance. A rate of 5s. 7d. was charged for slates from Nenagh station to our station, while the rate for Welsh slates was 7s. a ton.

38558. What is that 6s. 7d. rate?—For ten

38559. For any quantity?—I believe it is for under six tons.

38560. Is not the Welsh slate rate for lots of over six tons?—I have the rate here as 7s. It might be that this quantity was a seven-ton lot.

38561. That makes all the difference; we ought to compare like with like if we can?—Yes. But for the slates quarries at home they ought to be a little concession made, to try and foster the traffic.

38562. Quite right; but in these two cases if the comparison is not on all forms we had better leave it.—The distance is fifteen miles shorter. I do not know what the rate from Dublin for Welsh slates is under six-ton lots, but I do not think it would be more than about 7s. 6d. or 8s. at the very outside. 5s. 7d. is a high rate.

38563. It is 6s. 7d. for forty-five miles as against 7s. for fifty?—Yes.

Mr. Taffee.—The rate for wagon-loads is only about 4s. 10d.

Witness.—From where?

Mr. Taffee.—Fifty-one miles, Dublin to Maryborough.

Witness.—For wagon loads I think it will be more.

Mr. Taffee.—That is for sixteen loads; or the scale I do not think it would be more than that.

Witness.—4s. 10d.

Mr. Taffee.—I do not say that that would be the precise rate, but it would be about that.

Witness.—I do not think I have had slates at that price at any time.

Mr. Taffee.—I might correct another point now. The distance from Mountbellew to Maryborough is nine miles, not seven.

Witness.—Here is a quantity of under five tons—4 tons 14½ cwt., I see the rate there was 6s. 1d.

38564. Chairman.—That is under six tons?—Yes, just under five tons. So that the relative rate I gave you there was correct; the 7s. would be for the smaller quantity.

38565. Then with regard to an important traffic in Ireland—artificial manures!—There is a good deal of artificial manure manufactured in Ireland. I got some Irish manufactured and also some English-made manures. The rates from Dublin for the English manure—we will get it down in truck loads at about 5s. 11d., but we pay as high as 8s. 3d. a ton for Irish stuff from Limerick. The distance from Limerick I do not know exactly, but it would be just a station or two below Nenagh. We consider that rate very high.

38566. From Limerick to Maryborough, 8s. 3d. for a truck load as compared with what from Dublin?—5s. 11d.

Mr. Taffee.—It is seventy-two miles from Limerick.

38566a. Chairman.—And Dublin is fifty

Mr. Taffee.—Fifty-one.

38567. Chairman.—What are artificial manures worth per ton?—It depends altogether on the quality. Some phosphates would be worth about 50s., but high grade bone manures run up to 64, 65, or 66 a ton; that is cost price.

38568. What is basic slag worth a ton?—That runs according to quality also. It can be bought at from 42 a ton up to nearly 53.

38569. With regard to goods carried at owner's risk and at company's risk, you have had some experience, of course, in your own business?—Yes. We find that if anything we get by rail at owner's risk is badly handled or broken we have really no redress. It is useless to make any claim in respect of it, even if there is delay in the delivery of the goods. Speaking of manure, I ordered some manure. It was

getting near the end of the season, and I did not want to hold any of it, so an order came in I telegraphed for it, as it does not improve by carrying over. I telegraphed on one occasion to Limerick for a wagon load of manure; it took about four days to come. By the negligence of somebody connected with the railway company, I do not know where, it was left at Ballysheehy. It was eighteen miles away, but they could not trace it for me, and I lost a considerable number of orders and an amount of profit. I kept an exact account of the number of people who came to me for the manure I had ordered, and whose orders I lost, and I sued the Railway Company and got a decree from the County Court Judge for 25, but on some technical point the Railway Company appealed, took the case to the higher Court, and I was non-suited there. The case was a very plain one; I should have had the manure the next morning, but I did not have it for four days.

38570. What was the technical point?—I really do not know what it was; it was a purely legal argument altogether. Of course the Judge took the evidence in the matter.

38571. You lost the action and you lost the sale of the stuff?—Yes.

38572. That is quite an exceptional case, I suppose?—Not at all. About a month ago I sold a second-hand engine and thrasher to a man to be delivered at the station below us, about seven miles off. I sold it on a Monday evening, and that very evening about seven or eight o'clock I went word to the stationmaster that I should want a suitable truck to carry the engine and thrasher down the line, and he said he would attend to it directly, which I believe he did. The next morning I thought I would have a wagon to take it away, but no wagon had come. I sent up to him again and asked him to wire so the matter was urgent. It was very urgent, because the threshing season was on, and every day the man who had bought the thrasher was without it meant about 25 to him, and of course he was pressing me for it. I asked the station master to wire the next day, and he did, but no wagon turned up. I went to Dublin the next day myself and went to the traffic manager's office. I saw a gentleman there, I do not know his name, and he informed me in a very off-hand way that the Company was not bound to provide wagons at all. I said, "Is this machine to lie there for the next month or two in case the Railway Company cannot give me a wagon to take it away?" and he said, "Yes, or longer." In the meantime the man who purchased the machine from me has lost about 68, and he is now declining to complete his contract except I grant him this concession of 45. So that there is a matter of 27 for me, because it was four days after, on the Thursday, before this machine could be loaded.

38573. It required a special truck, I suppose?—It takes a large truck; an ordinary truck will not carry it.

38574. It has to be a special truck?—Yes.

38575. Do you not think that that might occur on any railway, either in this country or in Ireland?—These are things which are not carried every day, but they are carried frequently; a truck that will carry one of those large furniture vans that are frequently seen would carry this machine.

38576. But at Maryborough you do not expect them to keep special trucks for furniture vans and threshing machines?—No, but I would expect them to have one at Dublin, and if they had not one there they could wire to Killaloe or Waterford, and the whole thing would be on the way in a couple of hours.

38577. That is impossible?—To wire, I mean.

38578. How long did it take you to get the truck?—It came on Thursday evening.

38579. And when did you order it?—On Monday evening.

38580. Say Tuesday morning, because you said it was eight o'clock at night?—Yes, but there was a train going to Dublin, and they could have sent a message up by train. I know the station master would do it; I am quite sure he would. I mention this just to correct the whole thing, and to show that the public is really at the mercy of the Railway Company.

38581. What do you suggest as a remedy for this?—It is not my suggestion alone, but also that of the

Complaint as
to the liability
of recovering
loss from com-
pacts where
owner's risk
rates are
charged.

Then Commissioners whom I represent; they believe that State purchase of the railways would be the only solution of the railway question in Ireland. We believe that it would foster our industries and help us in every way. We are crippled by rates and everything else; we are a poor country; we cannot afford to pay excessive rates; we have not the traffic or the trade; we probably do not get the profits that are made on this side of the Channel; and we believe that if the State took over the railways they would have very good security for their money. The profits of working the companies, together with the guarantee of the counties, would be sufficient security for the repayment of the interest on the loan, and would leave a good solid margin afterwards, I believe, because there would be a great saving on the working expenses of the whole system.

3663. That is the view of your Commissioners?—Yes.

Examined by Colonel HUTCHESON PEET.

3664. I gather that the grievance from which you suffered some years ago with regard to insufficient goods accommodation and so on has been largely removed by the acquisition of the Waterford and Central Ireland Railway?—Largely.

3665. But with regard to those other complaints as to piffering and so on, that goes on at present?—They remain.

3666. And the Railway Company will not accept any responsibility as regard to them?—No.

3667. Have you put the matter before the Department of Agriculture; they have power to investigate such complaints and to bring pressure to bear upon the Railway Company?—We have never brought it before them.

3668. You know that they have that power, do you not?—Yes, I have heard of it.

3669. As a matter of fact, they have usefully employed their power in many instances. The representation of a public body like that often has the effect of getting a railway company to give its attention to a matter where they would not pay the same attention to the reconstruction of a private trader?—I believe that probably it would have that effect.

3670. I think it is very desirable that you should make their assistance in this particular case. With regard to those, what you call high rates for short distances, you are aware, of course, that the reason of that is that the charge for terminals is the same whether the commodity is carried five or fifty miles; by Act of Parliament the railway companies are entitled to charge the same station and service terminals whether the article is carried five or fifty miles?—I was not aware of that.

3671. Is the particular instance, under Class C, given, they can charge 1s. terminal at each end, that is 2s.; so 2s. of the rate that they charge you is made up of station terminals?—I see.

3672. Chairman.—That is why I suggested that the rate seemed reasonable?—Yes. I was not aware of that fact. But I cannot see where the charge for terminals comes in, seeing that at the terminals they do no work.

3673. Colonel HUTCHESON PEET.—That may be so with regard to service terminals, but that is station terminals. They are entitled under Act of Parliament also to charge certain service terminals, for loading and unloading, covering and uncovering, if they do it. In this particular case I gather that they did not?—No.

3674. The conveyance charge for these seven miles works out at 13.66d. or 1s. 1d.; the terminals are 2s. in this particular case, because they are not entitled to charge 6d. for loading or unloading, so their maximum charge is 2s. 1d.—If they did loading and unloading?

3675. No, it would be 2s. 5d. then; that is the maximum charge including loading and unloading. In this particular case it is 2s. 1d., and they charge 2s. as a matter of fact, 2s. 5d. What I want to put to you is whether you think that, seeing the great bulk of the traffic in Ireland is short distance traffic, the Act of Parliament which enables the company to charge the same terminals irrespective of distance, and also to have a decreasing rate as the distance increases, does not operate very adversely on short distance traffic?—Undoubtedly.

3676. That I think follows naturally?—Yes.

3677. Might it not be a matter for consideration whether there should not be some amendment of the law which enables the company to charge the same terminals when the traffic is carried a very short distance as they do when it is carried a long distance?—I think it is very desirable that there should be an amendment.

3678. You understand my point?—I do, thoroughly.

3679. That it acts very injuriously on short distance traffic, which is the bulk of the traffic in Ireland?—Yes.

3680. If the traffic is carried a long distance and the terminals are spread over the longer distance, they do not press so hardly on the consignee or the consignee?—No.

3681. But they undoubtedly do when the distance is short?—Yes.

3682. Now, with regard to this rate for slates; perhaps the railway people will look into that, as I think there must be some error. The conveyance rate for slates, a four-ton lot, from Keshagh, was 5s. 7d. for a distance of forty-five miles, I think you said?—I imagine that that would be taken relatively with the 7s.; it would be under four pence.

3683. Then they could charge under Class C; you know that slates are carried under Class B if in quantities of four tons; but if the quantity is less they are entitled to charge under Class C?—I put the rate for about the same quantity.

3684. The conveyance rate, exclusive of terminals, under Class B, would be only 4s. 10d., and the station terminals are only 1s., which would make it 5s. 10d. as against 5s. 7d. I presume that 3d. rate is for lots under four tons.

Mr. TAYLOR.—That is so. The four-ton rate is about 5s. 6d. under Class B.

3685. Colonel HUTCHESON PEET.—It would be 5s. 10d., conveyance 4s. 10d., and terminals 1s. In that particular instance it must nearly approach the maximum?—It appears to the Irish trader that there would be an over-charge, because we consider Keshagh quite a local place compared with Dublin, and the rate being within a few pence per ton, I was certainly of opinion that we were over-charged in the matter.

3686. Of course, the rates are well within the companies' maximum powers; there is nothing illegal in them, as you can see from the way I put it. What I want to ask you is whether, in your opinion, in view of the conditions under which the trade of Ireland is carried on, there might not be some amendment in regard to the rates for short distance traffic?—There ought to be an amendment, I think.

3687. At any rate, I suppose your evidence goes to show that the effect of these low rates for slates, for cross-Channel goods coming into the country, operates very adversely towards the home manufacturer or producer, whatever it is?—Very adversely.

3688. Then with regard to this complaint about your driver. I gather that it is not so much a complaint against the local service as against the manner in which you were treated at the head office in Dublin?—That and the delay of the truck, which is the most substantial part of it. It means up to the present that I am minus 27 on my deal in the matter, and I will probably have to press the man to try to get it. That is all brought about by the Railway Company.

3689. As the Chairman suggested, at a station like Maryborough, the Company could hardly be expected to have this truck, but at the same time three days is probably an unreasonably long time to delay its delivery. I understood you to say that the traffic manager or someone in his department informed you that it was within the power of the Railway Company to keep your truck waiting for a period of three months?—That they need not provide a truck at all is a mere no to understand.

3690. If that is a correct expression of their views on the subject, your contention naturally would be that it was rather a high-handed manner in which to treat a trader of the country?—Very high-handed. With regard to rolling-stock, we frequently find that we are short of wagons; there is a big trade done in grain from Maryborough to Dublin, and unless we give notice the day before we cannot get enough trucks sometimes to get the corn sent away. There seems to be a scarcity of rolling-stock as far as wagons are concerned at our station.

Nov. 16, 1907.

Mr. James J. And, etc.
Representative of the Maryborough Town Commissioners.

The inequality of the present system of fixing the rates and terminals for short distance traffic.

The excessive rate for slates.—Keshagh to Maryborough happens on Irish industry.

Complaint that the supply of trucks at Maryborough station is frequently inadequate in the traffic.

Alleged scarcity of rolling-stock on that section of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

Nov. 16, 1907. 38710. *Chairman.*—At certain periods of the year?

—Yes.
38711. *Colonel Hatchess Fox.*—If you give reasonable notice of your requirements they will have them probably—if you give a day's notice? But at a time of the year when there is a certain amount of traffic continually going on, they ought to hold an average number of wagons to meet that traffic. It is not a thing that is variable, a big lot to-day and none to-morrow; it is about an average quantity each day.

38712. At certain seasons of the year you can guarantee a certain quantity, and you think that under such circumstances the Company ought to come halfway to meet you by having a certain number of wagons there to meet your requirements?—Yes.

38713. You are a member of the County Council, I believe?—Not at present; I was.

38714. You are a member of the Maryborough Town Commissioners?—Yes.

38715. Do you represent their views in the evidence you have given?—Yes.

38716. I gather that they are in favour of a radical and fundamental change in the manner in which the railways of the county are administered?—Yes.

38717. They would prefer that the railways should be put under an Irish administration?—Yes.

38718. Responsible to Irish public opinion?—Yes.

38719. Failing that being practicable, have they expressed any views, or are you prepared to express

any views, as to the advisability or otherwise of their being placed under State control?—If they were under an Irish Board of management I am quite sure that the State would have the control all the same—just the same as they control through the Local Government Board the other public boards of the country. The local boards manage and disburse all the money and do all the business of management, but the Local Government Board have a control over them afterwards.

38720. But, of course, the Local Government Board and the other Departments in Dublin are directly under the Imperial Parliament, are they not?—I think so.

38721. Do I gather that you would favour such a course?—If the State advances the money on the security of the lines and upon the security of the country at large, I think it would not be unreasonable that the State should have something to say in the way of control; but if the management were Irish it would be far more likely to be successful.

38722. You would prefer Irish management?—I do not think it would be a success unless the control were Irish.

38723. But in the event of the State finding the money, you think the country would be prepared to give the security of the rates and of the railways and to let the State have a voice in the administration?—I am quite sure of it.

The Commission adjourned till the 20th January, 1908

State
purchase of the
railways and
their control
by an elected
Irish authority
strengthened.

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APPENDIX No. 1.

EXTRACTS from a REPORT on the ARIGNA MINERAL FIELD, furnished to the Treasury by DAVID RANKINE, C and M.R.

Glasgow.

14th January, 1903

As instructed by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, I have examined the Arigna Mineral Field in Ireland with the view of reporting on its mineral and commercial features.

The Arigna River flows in a narrow valley between two mountains which rise therefrom, with a steepish slope, to a height of about 750 feet above the river, and a height of fully 1,100 feet above the sea. The strata on both sides have for their base a series of thin laminations of shale, or "blaze," which measure several hundred feet in thickness, and embedded in which are some seams of clayband ironstones, which vary in thickness from two or three inches to about nine inches.

Overlying the shale are some brown and greyish-coloured sandstones with an intervening shale, which, as usual, vary in thickness, but average in all over sixty feet. Above these is an inferior coal named the crow coal, which I measured at one place twenty inches in thickness, and which rests upon a stratum of what has been reported to be good fire clay, varying in thickness from one to three feet; but, where seen by me near to the workmen's houses belonging to the Arigna Mining Company, it is mostly composed of sandstone plates and inferior clay, the whole measuring about 2 feet 6 inches, and being quite unfit for use as fire clay.

The crow coal is very ready, with thin partings of sandstone or sandy marl, and is not a marketable subject, although if worked and sold at a cheap rate it might be found locally useful for lime or brick-burning, or such other purposes for which a high-class fuel is not necessary.

Above the crow coal are various sandstone beds, together with some interesting sandy shale beds, measuring in all about thirty feet, and resting on the upper of these sandstone beds, known in the district as the "Sand Rock," is the main coal seam.

The main coal is presently being worked in the Arigna Valley at five places.

Two of these workings are by the Arigna Mining Company on a royalty held from the Countess of Kingston. The principal working is on the Aghabally property on the southern side of the Arigna River. It is a day level entering from the surface, and now extends some 600 yards towards from the mine mouth. I went into the mine, and saw the coal at the extreme end of the working. It measures twenty inches in thickness. The upper half of the coal is the best. The lower half is not so good.

The coal is won by the miners picking in the lower part of the seam, and about seven inches of fully a third of the whole thickness of the seam is produced as culm or dross, for only a portion of which is there any sale at a low figure, the remainder being stored on the surface, where large heaps of it are now lying.

The main coal is carried to Arigna Station, a distance of about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, down a road with steep grades, at a cost of 2s. per ton.

The coal is not high-class. It contains a considerable percentage of ash, but it is, nevertheless, a useful coal, suitable for burning where there is a good body of fuel and a strong draught, and it is now carried considerable distances by rail. The local demand is small, the residents generally using peat, although some are now buying a little of the main coal, and work it up with clay into balls, and use it in their household fires.

The other mine belonging to the Arigna Company is the Seltannaverry, situated on the mountains on the northern side of the Arigna River. The distance between the two mines owned by the Arigna Mining Company, measured in a direct line across the valley, is two miles; but when measured round the road, which in many places is steep, the distance is about five miles.

The coal worked in the Seltannaverry Mine is

greater than that worked in the Aghabally Mine. The length of mine underground is about 800 yards, and I measured the coal at the face of the mine, where it also measures twenty inches in thickness.

From the mouth of the mine a roadway, several hundred yards in length, has been laid, along which the coal is conveyed to a depot at the side of the public road, from whence it is carried to the Arigna Station.

The total sales from the two mines belonging to the Arigna Company for the year 1902 are said to have been 8,687 tons, made up of 5,941 tons round coal, 2,528 tons culm, and 888 tons slag, the latter being the round part of the small coal.

Another colliery owner in the district is Mr. Michael Leyden, who has also two mines, one of which, the River Lower, is also situated on the mountains on the southern side of the Arigna River, about half a mile eastwardly of the Arigna Company's mine; and the other is on the mountains on the northern side of the river at Tully Merrow, about two miles northward from the Arigna Company's Seltannaverry mine. This Tully Merrow mine was formerly worked from an adit or day level, but now the coal is worked from a pit about twenty yards in depth. I examined the coal, and found it also about twenty inches in thickness, and somewhat similar to what has already been described. It is said that the output is presently about ten tons per day.

The River Lower mine is also an adit by which the coal has lately been won, and I found the coal is at a distance of about 200 yards from the mine mouth to be about twenty-seven inches in thickness, although it was said it had been passed through as thick as three feet. The output is small, the quantity sold being said to range from fifteen to thirty tons per week, although the mine is capable of putting out more.

There is another working by Collier Brothers about three miles beyond the Arigna Company's mine on the southern side of the river, but the output is very small.

The seam worked by these miners, which is called the Main coal, is really the only coal for which an outside market may be found. Its extent may be traced with fair accuracy, so it, or the rocks with which it is associated, crop out on the face of the valley, the horizontal distance of the outcrop of the southern field being about 1,300 yards from the Arigna River, and the outcrop on the northern side being about a mile from the river, the vertical height above the river being about 500 feet, and in past days it has been worked along the outcrop or at places where the depth to it is shallow, the old pits still standing wholly or partially open, or their position where filled up being readily identified by small mounds of rubbish throughout the coal field. There are not, of course, any plans to show the extent of the old workings, but the system of working, and all that relates to them, makes it certain that the men worked was small, and in estimating the extent of unworked coal, I think it is reasonable to assume that three-fourths of the original area of coal is still unworked.

The length of field containing the main coal on the southern side of the Arigna River is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. It is at its widest on the south-eastern end, about a mile and a quarter, but much of it is less than half that width, and its area, as measured on Ordnance plan is about 1,500 acres. Deducting a fourth from that, and taking the coal as averaging twenty inches in thickness, it will contain a gross quantity of about 5,000,000 tons.

The field on the northern side of the Arigna River is not so large. It is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in length, and its area about 900 acres, and, deducting a fourth from that for past working, etc., the quantity of the main coal now in the field will be about 1,500,000 tons. The total quantity of main coal is thus 4,600,000.

Petty a third of the seam is produced as small coal, so that the round coal available for general use will be about 3,000,000 tons.

The only means of outlet for the produce is by cartage to Arnprior Railway Station, down a steep road, at a cost for cartage of two shillings per ton. From some of the more distant parts of the field the cost will necessarily be greater. Cartage is an uncertain and unsatisfactory mode of disposal. It prevents natural increase of production, it breaks the coal in transportation, and as at times it has to be temporarily stockpiled at the railway depot, it suffers from exposure to the weather, and by leakage caused by stocking and subsequent lifting from stock.

The lands under which the coal extends are owned by several proprietors, and the coals are let only in those which are worked by the Arnprior Company, by Mr. Laydon, and by Collier Brothers. There are several properties in which the coal is unlet, and in which it is now lying dormant, although there have been partial workings in most of them.

These figures of quantity are given under the calculations made in former days. The earliest report I have seen is by Mr. Richard Griffiths, junior, his report being published in the year 1818. Mr. Griffiths writes of two seams, the one extending to 2,800 acres, and the other of 1,300 acres (the addition of these being 4,000 acres), and immediately following thereon he deals with a total of 4,000 acres, and an estimated quantity of 30,000,000 tons, so as if he intended to show the total quantity of coals of all kinds without reference to their workability. The large area shown in his calculation was, therefore, doubtless arrived at by including the area under which the inferior coals extend, and which I exclude from calculation, and probably also to the inclusion of another area, which is without the Arnprior Valley. Weight is lost to my inference from the fact that the other factor in his calculation is the quantity of 7,840 tons of coal per acre. To yield that quantity would require a thickness of five feet three inches of coal. In the table of strata contained in his report three coal seams are described, the strata being recorded in ascending order, the lower first and these are—

- No. 6. Coal mixed with thin laminae of slate clay, 1 to 3 feet
No. 12. Good coal mixed with thin laminae of slate clay, 2 ft. 6 ins. to 3 ft. 4 ins.
No. 15. Coal, upper bed, 8 to 9 ins.

Arranging these thicknesses we have—

No. 3,	2 feet 0 inches
No. 12,	2 " 11 "
No. 15,	0 " 8 "

Total, 5 feet 7 inches

It is thus apparent that his report was, as already said, intended to give an estimate of the gross quantity of coal in the field without reference to its capability for use, or the possibility of its being worked. It is clear, however, that for marketable and profitable purposes the upper bed, which is only from eight to nine inches in thickness, should be wholly eliminated from calculation, and that the lower seam described by Mr. Griffiths as varying from one to three feet in thickness, and which he says "contains numerous thin layers of black slate, which renders it of little value except for lime-burning," and that "on exposure to air it soon divides into thin flakes," and that it was "very wrought," is of little commercial value, and it might have been better if the quantities had been estimated separately.

As regards the "good coal" seam, which Mr. Griffiths states as being from 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet 4 inches in thickness, it is probable that such thicknesses may prevail in a portion of the field which was being worked when his report was written, but, as I have shown, the coal is much thinner at the various places where it is now worked, and I also found that in the recent workings there are patches of the seam which have been mined around and left unworked owing to the coal having thinned down several inches under the twenty inches which is recognized as being about the workable thickness, and that at which it is generally found. Consequently twenty inches seems a fair average thickness.

The reporters who have more recently dealt with the extent of coal here, like myself, eliminated the upper and lower coals from calculation, and based their estimate of quantity on the one seam as a

thickness of twenty inches, but in arriving at a quantity of 10,000,000 tons it would appear as if they had, like Mr. Griffiths, taken the area of field at 5,000 acres. Whether they personally inquired into the area, or simply accepted Mr. Griffiths's area, I cannot say, but it is apparent how the divergence in the views expressed by the various reporters have arisen.

Then as to the main coal. The way in which it may be generally opened out makes it suitable for economical working. The practice was in past years to work it from vertical shafts; but in recent years advantage has been taken of the natural contour of the ground to open it out by day mines or adits. In that way it may be conveyed cheaply from the mine face to the surface, and the drainage of the mine is obtained inexpensively. Capital outlay is, therefore, less, and the working costs are also less than are entailed where shafts are necessary. But the small output now obtained from individual workings makes on-cost expenses high, and if the outputs were increased, the cost of the coal per ton would be diminished. The coal is presently wholly drawn underground by manual labour, and as the hatches or tubs in which it is carried contain only about three-and-a-half hundredweight each, a great deal of travel is required for a small quantity. The small hatch is partly a consequence of an endeavour to reduce working costs by the limitation of the height of roadway, the ordinary working roadways being from 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet high, so that it is only young lads that can perform the drawing. From somewhat similar seams worked in Scotland the weight of coal in each hatch is, as a minimum, about double of that at Arnprior. As workings advance and roadways lengthen it will become of greater importance to have larger hatches, and if the mines are extended so as to work the whole coal to the surface on the other side of the mountain, and bring it to the surface in the Arnprior Valley, it will be proper to introduce mechanical haulage, so as to reduce the cost of underground haulage to a minimum. It is of course desirable to increase the output quantity, so as to get full advantage of mechanical appliances.

If that were done it would be also proper to introduce coal-winning machinery, by which working costs would be further reduced, and the drum produced would be lessened by about half, the quantity of round coal being correspondingly augmented.

To attain that the markets for the coal would have to be extended, and much larger outputs raised from individual mines.

A railway in the valley would tend to do so. Such a railway should be public, open to the various properties abutting thereon, and, being in the valley, the coals could be generally taken in the hatches direct from the mine down self-acting tramways, and discharged into the railway wagons without transshipment, at a saving, after allowing for the dues on the railway, of not less than one shilling per ton. There would be a further saving by less leakage of the coal, and any quantity for which a market could be found could be worked and despatched with facility.

As to the markets for the coal, my view is that the Arnprior coal is generally of a lower value than the Scotch coals, and possibly if these were placed alongside each other the Arnprior coals would command from one to two shillings per ton over the Arnprior coal, as prices now are. The lowest prices presently commanded by the Arnprior coals are about 12s. per ton on quay at Belfast. Arnprior coal could be put on rail at present costs about 12s. per ton, and leave a good profit, and therefore the one could start from the place of origin at Arnprior, and the other from Belfast, and meet midway, where the Arnprior coal could be sold at 2s. per ton less than the cheapest Arnprior coal, and if improvements were effected in raising at Arnprior and outputs increased, so as to lessen the cost of production, a correspondingly greater pull would be obtained over the Arnprior coals, and the market would be correspondingly widened. I, therefore, think that it might be reasonably expected that all along the narrow gauge line to which the Arnprior coal could be carried without transshipment, they would command a sale. What may be the total coal consumption in the district thus commanded I am unable to say, but I think that it might be taken that within such a radius it would be so extensive as to permit of the present output being very largely increased.

As regards the culm or small coal, were that produced in larger quantity a market might be found for it by making it into briquettes either at Arigna or carrying the culm and the tar or pitch to a common centre, and manufacturing it there, and so the trade arising from the working of the subjects would be correspondingly enlarged.

Similarly, in days to come when the main coal seam is getting worked out, or, possibly before that, the inferior seam coal, which I have for the present discarded from calculation, might be worked, crushed, washed and cleaned, and made into briquettes with advantage both to the worker and to consumers for whom such fuel might be suited.

In connection with the development of the coal industry, it will have been observed that there are a number of properties in which the minerals are united and not worked. If developments were undertaken it might be expected that the whole of the proprietors would work operations to be directed to the working of the minerals in these lands, so that they might obtain a share of the royalties to be derived therefrom. I fear it would be impossible to do so, although it might, nevertheless, be prudent for a company to secure the rights over more of the lands than they were prepared to work at the start, so that future competition would be avoided.

I think that it would be proper to aim at the ultimate equipment of two mines, one on each side of the valley, looking for an output of about sixty tons per day, or, say, 15,000 tons per annum, from each mine (300 working days in the year); and surely one is not ever sanguine in assuming that in the wide area to be served a market would be found within a short period for 30,000 tons per annum. The mines could output a half more, and not improbably double the quantity.

The fatness at which the coal is found, and the comparative ease with which it may be opened out by day mines makes it unnecessary to provide heavy machinery.

The main seam of coal would maintain an output of 30,000 tons per annum for more than a hundred years, and I have little doubt but that before the expiry of that time the coal would be worked and treated as heretofore indicated, and the life of the field with a similar output prolonged for about another hundred years.

Flagstones

The Arigna Company have been working flagstones from a quarry on the headland on the southern side of the Arigna River at Crosshill. The beds presently worked underlie the coals. These were employed in the quarry when I visited it. I understood that the leading man of the three contractors for the working and is paid a shilling per square yard for working and dressing the stones. The face of the quarry presently consists of about five feet of surface clay and stones, followed by three feet of gritty stone, then 3 feet 4 inches of flagstone, 2 feet 8 inches of sandstone, and other 3 feet 9 inches of flagstone. That gives fully seven feet of flagstones. The flagstones are of a pale brown colour. They generally have natural beds, varying from about two inches to five inches in thickness, and some of the stones can be got of an area of about six feet square. The total sales for the last year were, I was informed, 181 tons, consisting mainly of floor slabs and house and kerbs for roadway purposes. They are said to be sent as far as London.

I was informed that on the top of the Kilmoran Mountains, at Cruik Din, above the coals, the flagstones were superior to those under the coals at Crosshill, the reason for working the latter being its greater accessibility. Accordingly, I also examined Cruik Din quartzite, and found that in past years there had been considerable quarrying. The stones outcrop on the face of the slope, and the total thickness of rock of one kind and another may probably be about fifty feet. But I could examine only a few feet of it. The extreme upper beds are thin, and had been evidently quarried for roofing tiles, of which kind of rock I saw about three or four feet; lower down heavier flagstones had been obtained of varying thicknesses up to five or six inches, and they could apparently be got of large dimensions. I saw an old working face of a total thickness of seven feet, but the bottom of the rock had not been reached. These stones are, I think, of a somewhat better colour than the other. The man who presently works the

Crosshill quarry said he had also worked this, and, when asked about the stones here, he said he liked the stones where he now was working equally well with the others.

The conclusion I arrived at is that there is an extensive deposit of flagstones which might be cheaply worked. The stones have to be carried from the present quarry to rail, and, while the road is not good on a whole, the portion of it which extends from the public road into the quarry is very bad. There is no road to the higher quarry, and the stones had to be carried on the backs of animals down the hill. Given proper facilities for getting away the stones, a cheap flagstone and other kinds of special stones could be had, but the extent of market which there may be for them I cannot say, but one cannot help thinking that there must be a considerable market, which, however, would need to be cultivated, and the trade pushed.

Ironstones.

At Arigna the ironstones are embedded in the blues or slate clay, which rise up from the river to a thickness of several hundred feet. So far as I can judge, the bands of ironstones are not numerous, for I saw great thicknesses of the slate clay in which there are no signs of ironstone seams. At one place on the river bank I observed two beds of ironstones, the one an irregular nodular deposit, which might average about nine inches in thickness, and the other, about four feet higher, might average three or four inches in thickness. There was no evidence of these having been worked. There had been constructed in ancient days, at great expense, a tramroad from the Arigna Ironworks up the valley, and past the place where I saw these beds, and that tramway led into an adit by which I understood ironstones was formerly worked for manufacturing purposes at the Ironworks. The adit could not now be examined, and I did not see ironstones in the strata near its mouth, so that what was the thickness or kind of seam opened upon I am unable to say. But judging by the general stratification and from all I can learn I think we may assume it was Clayband ironstones which were worked. Several analyses have been placed before me of the ironstones seams at Arigna. These show some of the ironstones to be good Clayband seams; but they are not as a whole better than the usual run of Clayband seams in Scotland, of which there are many not far removed from the iron works lying dormant, because manufacturers for the present prefer imported ores. And without wishing to deny the quality of the Arigna ores, I would, nevertheless, point out that where the subject of analyses has been a ball or nodular piece of iron stone, the result is better than the whole mass proves to be in practical working.

Further, in considering the value of the Arigna ironstones, some parties have thought that the cost of 2s. 6d. per ton, at which it is said it was formerly obtained at outcrops along the hillsides, or collected from the bed of the river, is that at which calculations of cost and price at which the claimed ore might be delivered in Scotland or England should be based. From what I have seen of the positions of the deposits and otherwise, I would say that while it is possible that some little quantity of ore might be still collected at a nominal cost, yet for a regular working, it would be proper to take the cost of the ore at not less than about 7s. 6d. per calibrated ton.

I, therefore, conclude that for the present the iron ores in the Arigna Valley cannot be worked and disposed of to a profit.

Fireclay

I have already (par. 3, p. 1), referred to the fireclay where seen by me, and I may add that no one pointed to any place in the valley where it is in better condition. I have, therefore, no other course than to say it must for the present be left out of account.

Shale, otherwise Blue or Slate Clay

I was much struck by the large thickness of shale beds to be found in the valley, and by the readiness with which they might be worked or quarried.

Up till a few years ago no value was attached to such shale. But it was found that shales generally can be made into a cheap brick, which are useful for a large variety of building operations, and so work after work has been laid down for the manufacture of the shale bricks which had in former years been raised to the surface in connection with the working

Crosshill
(Quarry)

Cruik Din
(Quarry)

of these ironstones and coal seams, and which had for long covered the ground as worthless heaps.

They became valuable properties, and wherever near a building centre they are being worked up rapidly, and the manufacture of more distant heaps are being gradually undertaken.

From my acquaintance with such manufactures, I entertain the belief that the shale deposits in the Arigna Valley might be made into a good useful brick, which could be sold at Arigna at a little over 30s per 1,000 with a fair profit. I think such a brick would be of much benefit over a large district. A

wide market is needed, because a single machine will make about 2,500,000 bricks a year, and two machines can be worked more cheaply than one, so that manufacturers generally aim at the productive capacity of a work being not less than 5,000,000 bricks a year, equal to a tonnage of about 50,000 tons.

While I have given expression to the foregoing view, it is proper to add that before incurring expense or delay, or otherwise making the shale a feature for consideration, it would be proper to have it practically tested.

DAVID RANKIN.

APPENDIX No. 2.

REPORT ON CERTAIN MINERAL DISTRICTS in the county of Leitrim, furnished to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, by Mr. E. ST. JOHN LYBURN, ARCS, F.G.S., Mining Engineer.

October, 1904.

In accordance with instructions received from the Secretary to this Department, I proceeded to the County Leitrim, and inspected the districts mentioned below—

Creeves

Various attempts have been made at Creeves, to work the clay ironstones which are found in the vicinity, but so far these attempts have not been successful. The clay ironstones occur either as continuous bands or as nodules in the Yoredale series, which series underlies the coal measures. The bands vary in thickness from, say, four to ten inches.

At Tullymore there are two beds of clay ironstone exposed on the sides of a mountain stream. They average about six inches in thickness. Some work has been done here, and I examined one of the old dump heaps, and found some of the pieces of ironstone to measure about eleven inches in depth.

At Grelan there is an exposure of clay ironstone in a stream, averaging about nine inches. The ironstone deposits also appear to exist on Aliwan.

Throughout the district numerous nodules and pieces of clay ironstone are found in the streams and pits.

At Boleynack, north-east of Creeves Iron Works, coal measures occur. A shaft was sunk some years ago, and coal is said to have been discovered. I could not get down the shaft, as it is full of water and debris. At another place, said to be on the townland of Lough, a small prospecting pit has been sunk to a depth of about five feet. I managed to get into this pit, and crept along a small drive about ten feet long. In the face of the drive I saw some coal. It was not possible to measure the exact thickness of the coal seam, as it would be necessary to mine the floor and the roof in order to state definitely the thickness. Boleynack and Lough should be prospected either by means of shafts or diamond drills, in order to ascertain the thickness of the seams. My guides were unable to show me the meanings of the townlands. It would therefore be necessary to define accurately these meanings before a spot could be selected for being

Shree-an-Irin.

This district is called the Eastern Connacht Coalfield. Very little work has been done on this coalfield, and I consider it worthy of being examined either by means of shafts, adits, or diamond drills, in order to prove the formation, the portions deserving examination being the high parts of the mountain, where the millstone grit series are found. The valleys should not be prospected, as they are mostly composed of Yoredale shales and limestone, and coal will not be found in such formations. I examined various places where work has been done in looking for coal, but I could not obtain any definite information, owing to the shafts being filled in. In the event of boring being decided upon, it would be first necessary to define the meanings of the various townlands, and to have some pointed out by the owners of the townlands before a site could be decided upon. Bender or Gubavagh should receive the first attention of the prospector. Clay ironstone occurs in many places in the Shree-an-Irin district.

Drumkeenan.

I visited the site of the old pottery works at Spencer Harbour. It appears that about thirty years

ago a pottery existed there. This pottery turned out bricks, roofing tiles, and common pottery ware. The works are now in ruins. The clay is suitable for the manufacture of such articles, but before anything could be done here the question of markets should be carefully studied. I also examined an outcrop of carboniferous shale about three-quarters of a mile from the site of the old pottery. These shales were formerly used for the manufacture of bricks.

Gypsum (plaster stone) is found in the boulder clay or drift along the shores of Lough Allen at Spencer Harbour. The gypsum occurs as boulders, and I did not see any evidence of a bed of gypsum. I do not consider that it would pay to mine these boulders, as such mining would be more or less of random mining.

Twigspeck.

A shaft was put down here some years ago, but is now filled up. I examined the dump heap, and found indications of lead ore. There is no outcrop of a lode to be seen.

Shennans.

Some prospecting work has been done here. The workings are now overgrown with bush. I found some pieces of copper pyrites. No outcrop of the lode is to be seen.

Cleiragh.

I examined a deposit on the top of the mountain at Cleiragh, near Glenties, where some work has been done. The lode here consists of calcimargarite, and barites. In order to prove the lode it would be necessary to do some prospecting work, but I could not advise any expenditure in this direction, owing to the inaccessible nature of the deposits.

The iron ore of Leitrim is a clay ironstone, and averages about 35 per cent. of iron as compared with hematite, which contains 85 per cent. Clay ironstone is not worked to such a large extent as formerly. An ordinary blast furnace to produce, say, 50,000 tons per annum of pig-iron requires about 150,000 of clay ironstone. A blast furnace should have a "life" of about fifteen years in order to refund the capital (with interest) expended on the erection of such furnace. This would, therefore, mean that the contents of the ore body or deposit should be 2,250,000 tons. A casual supply might be procured from the alts throughout the county, but these would in time become exhausted, and it would be necessary to either "open-quarry" the material or mine it by means of shafts and levels.

During the course of my investigations in County Leitrim, I examined a place at the foot of Shree-an-Irin Mountains, where the owner of a property was advised to sink for coal in the Yoredale shales. The attempt was a failure, and the pit should have never been sunk. I mention this case as a warning to those who hold that coal occurs in these shales, and, as stated above, the valleys in this district of Leitrim are mostly in Yoredale shales, whilst the mountains are mostly in millstone grit.

I also visited the coal deposits worked by the Arigna Company at Arigna, and by Mr. Michael Leyden at Knockateen. These deposits at Arigna and Knockateen are handicapped by want of transport facilities.

(Signed), E. ST. JOHN LYBURN,

ARCS, F.G.S.,
Mining Engineer.

APPENDIX No. 3.

Correspondence between the Irish Flour Millers Association and the Railway and Canal Commission, the Great Northern (Ireland), Great Southern and Western, Midland Great Western, and Midland (Northern Counties Committee) Railway Companies on the subject of the analyses and equalisation of Grain and Breadstuffs rates, handed in by Mr. W. E. SHACKLETON, during his examination on the 15th October, 1906.

RAILWAY AND CANAL COMMISSIONERS,

Royal Court of Justice,

Strand, London, W.C.,

18th October, 1904.

SIR,—I am directed by the Railway Commissioners to acknowledge the receipt of your letter inquiring as follows:—

1.—When an Irish railway carries flour and grain products at a through rate from a town in England to a town in Ireland, can the Irish railway be obliged to show and can the public ascertain what proportion of this rate is earned by the Irish Railway for its portion of the service?

2.—Would an Irish railway be obliged to carry similar quantities of similar goods over their portion of the route at the same rate as their portion of the through rate?

And I am, in reply to your first inquiry, to say that if the through rate moves under Section 25 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, the portion intended for each company is required to be stated, and that if it is an agreed through or joint rate and application is made to the Commissioners for an order to show how much of it a company party to it receives, such an order could be made.

And in reply to your second inquiry, to say that it does not appear to be illegal for a company's local rate to be of higher amount; the power to charge two terminals in the one case, where only one or none could be charged in the other, would alone furnish ground for a difference.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed), THOMAS WHITFIELD,
For the Registrar.

II.

Callow,

16th August, 1905.

DEAR SIR,—I am instructed by the Committee of the Irish Flour Millers' Association to write you on the subject of "through rates" from English manufacturing centres to stations on your system.

Irish Millers are placed at a disadvantage by the fact that their English competitors are enabled to send their products to many inland points on your system at a rate, your portion of which is considerably less than the sum you charge Irish Millers over the same mileage.

This applies not only to Millers at such ports as Dublin, but still more emphatically to many country mills.

In considering the question as a whole it should be remembered that the consumption of mill products in any district bears a constant proportion to the population. That is to say, that to each district a certain tonnage of such goods has to be carried (whether in the form of grain to supply mills or of manufactured goods) and no reduction in freights will increase the quantity consumed. Your company is therefore at a definite loss if your share of earnings on a through rate is any less than the rate from the port of entry, or in the case of inland mills the aggregate of local rates. And on the latter case your loss is probably greater, as pointed out above.

In the past, when there was a large import trade in flour from America, Irish Millers were much handicapped by the cheap rates at which flour was distributed through Ireland on Ocean Bill of Lading Freight, a concession quite inalienable from an

Irish point of view. English Millers are now endeavouring to get cheap through rates, so that by obtaining unfair preference in freights they may capture the Irish trade in flour lost by the Americans.

Our Association, therefore, asks you for equalisation of your local freight rates on all cases, with the equivalents of the amounts you earn on through rates.

Yours truly,

(Signed), E. SHACKLETON.

B. Gamble, Esq.,

Goods Manager,

Great Northern Railway (I.),

Belfast.

J. Cowie, Esq.,

Traffic Manager,

Midland Railway (Northern Counties

Committee),

Belfast.

III.

Great Southern and Western Railway,

Traffic Manager's Office,

Dublin,

August 10th, 1905.

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th inst., asking that the company equalise our local rates with the equivalent amounts we receive out of through rates for grain and breadstuffs.

The matter has been carefully considered, and I regret the proposition is one that, for many reasons, cannot be agreed to.

If you desire it, I will call and state the objections fully.

Yours truly,

(Signed), E. A. NEALE.

The Secretary,

Irish Flour Millers' Association.

IV.

Great Northern Railway Co. (Ireland).

Goods Manager's Office,

Belfast,

17th August, 1905.

Reduced Through Rates for Flour, &c.

Interior English Stations to Interior Irish Stations.

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of yesterday, and in reply beg to say that no proposal has been put before the company for reduced through rates from Interior English Stations to Interior Irish Stations for flour or other breadstuffs, and if such a proposal is made you may rest assured that the interests of the Irish trade shall not be overlooked.

Yours truly,

(Signed), B. GAMBLE.

The Secretary,

Irish Flour Millers' Association.

V.

Midland Railway Company,
Northern Counties Committee,
Traffic Manager's Office,
Belfast.

22nd August, 1905

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 15th inst., I have looked carefully into the matter to which you have called my attention. I am at all times most anxious to encourage the local industries, but cannot see at present that your letter applies to the position. So far as our line is concerned, there is not any traffic passing and booked through from interior English manufacturing centres to stations on our system, and can assure you that in considering any proposal for reduced rates from such points which may come before me, the interest of the Irish business will be kept in view.

Yours truly,

(Signed), JAMES COWIE,

Traffic Manager

VI.

Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland,
Goods Manager's Office,
Broadstone Station,
Dublin.

23rd August, 1905.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 4th inst., regarding rates for meal, grain, flour, etc., and asking that we should equalise our local rates in all cases with the equivalent amounts we receive out of through rates, I beg to say that the subject has been fully considered, but I regret your proposal is one which could not be agreed to.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed), R. MONTGOMERY,

Goods Manager.

The Secretary,

Irish Flour Millers' Association.

On the appointment of this Commission the following identical letter was addressed to the same railway companies:—

VII.

4th September, 1906

DEAR SIR,—I have been directed by the Committee of the above Association to request you to kindly let me have particulars of your present rates of freight, per ton, for tea and wagon lots, and special (if any) on grain, flour, bran, pollard, and Indian meal, between Liverpool and the stations named, also those between Dublin and the same stations.

Will you further be good enough to give me an analysis of the construction of each rate, through and local, for the information of my Committee, who propose appearing to give evidence before the "Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways"?

Yours truly,

(Signed), JOHN BROWN.

The railway companies have supplied particulars of rates asked for, but only three of the companies have taken any notice of our request to furnish an

analysis of rates. The following letters have been received from the G. S. & W. Rly., Great Northern, and Northern Counties:—

VIII.

Great Southern and Western Railway,
Traffic Manager's Office,
Dublin.

September 14th, 1905.

R.I. 75023.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your application of the 4th inst., I beg to enclose herewith particulars of the rates for grain and produce between the stations named in your letter, and Dublin and Liverpool.

With regard to the second paragraph of your letter, I would point out that, in respect of the Dublin rates, the figures are all considerably below what the company is entitled to charge. They have not been made up on any fixed basis, having regard to a separate charge for each of the services and accommodations they are made to cover, but as comprehensive figures, and such an analysis as you ask could not be but fictitious. I have shown this company's maximum powers for the information of your Committee.

Yours truly,

(Signed), E. A. NEALE.

John Brown, Esq.,

Irish Flour Millers' Association,
Dublin.

IX.

Great Northern Railway Co. (Ireland),
Goods Manager's Office,
Belfast.

2nd October, 1906.

G.M.B. 06/2647.

Rates for Flour, etc.

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo. Having regard to the low rates that are charged for the traffic mentioned by you as compared with what the company is authorised to charge, it does not seem necessary to analyse the rates. If, however, any parties who have sent this traffic desire this information with reference to any consignments they have forwarded, and will give me particulars, the matter will have attention.

Yours truly,

(Signed), E. GAMBLE

W. R.

The Secretary,

Irish Flour Millers' Association,
Dock Mill,
Dublin.

X.

Midland Railway Company,
Northern Counties Committee,
Traffic Manager's Office,
Belfast.

5th October, 1906.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 28th September, I beg to say that the exceptional rates quoted are considerably under the ordinary class figures and have not been made up on any fixed scale, as including a separate and distinct fixed charge in respect of each of the services and facilities which they cover, but as all round rates having regard to the circumstances and the exigencies of the traffic and with a view to develop and encourage business, and, therefore, any such analysis of these rates, such as that asked for, would be more or less fictitious.

Yours truly,

(Signed), JAMES COWIE,

per R.L.,

Traffic Manager,

John Brown, Esq.,

Irish Flour Millers' Association,
Dock Mill,
Dublin.

APPENDIX No. 4.

COPIES of LETTERS between LORD GRANARD, POST OFFICE, LONDON, and the Right Hon. Lord FISHER, P.C., and between the POSTAL AUTHORITIES, DUBLIN, and the SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LINES, Great Northern Railway (Ireland), relative to proposed alterations in the running of the night Mail trains between Dublin and Belfast, referred to in the evidence of Mr. J. M. COX, Dundalk, on the 15th March, 1907, and Dr. E. M. THOMPSON, Omagh, on the 17th October, 1907.

(M. 5/14503.)

I.

Great Northern Railway Co (Ireland),
Office of Superintendent of the Lines,
Ainslie-street Terminus,
Dublin, 4th July, 1903

DEAR SIR—

We have received a memorial from the residents of Lurgan and Portadown praying that the 10 p.m. train from Belfast to Portadown should be altered to leave at 10.30 p.m.

It is proposed to alter the train to 10.30 p.m., and run through to Lurgan without stopping, but calling at Moore and Lurgan, as at present, arriving in Portadown at 11.30 p.m.; also to run a local train from Belfast to Lurgan at 10 p.m., calling at all intermediate stations.

I shall be glad to know if the Department have any objection to such an arrangement being brought into operation.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed),

R. J. MOORE

The Secretary,
General Post Office, Dublin.

II.

General Post Office, Dublin,
Reg No 23514.
5th August, 1903.

SIR—

With reference to your letter of the 4th ultimo (M. 5/14503), relative to the question of starting the night mail train from Belfast at 10.30 p.m. instead of 10 p.m., I have to inform you that with an arrival of the train at Portadown so late as 11.30 p.m., the forward parcel mails could not be dealt with in time to connect with the despatch by the Londonderry train, assuming that that train would still leave at the present hour, viz., 11.40 p.m. In the circumstances, it is feared that no change in the working of the train from Belfast, involving a later arrival at Portadown than now, could be agreed to.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed),

R. A. KERRISON,

Secretary.

R. J. MOORE, Esq.,
Great Northern Railway Company,

III.

General Post Office, London,
17th December, 1907.

DEAR LORD FISHER—

I have now looked into the question of arranging for a later departure of the night mail train from Belfast to Portadown, about which you wrote me on the 5th November.

The later departure would be of very little benefit to Belfast postally, as letters could not be posted later than at present, except at the head office, and even the slight gain effected there would necessitate an altogether disproportionate expenditure on staff alterations. But even if we did waive our objection on this ground, the amount of work which must be done in the Portadown Office between the arrival of the train from Belfast, and the departure of the train for Londonderry is such that we must have an interval of at least half-an-hour, so that the principal objection to the present service from the passenger point of view would not be remedied.

There are other objections, with which I need not trouble you; but you will see from the foregoing that the Post Office would not be justified in consenting, at any rate at present, to the suggested later departure of the train.

Yours very truly,

(Signed),

GRANARD

The Lord Fisher.

IV.

General Post Office, London,
4th June, 1907.

DEAR LORD FISHER—

I have made enquiry as to the suggestion in your letter of the 26th of April, that the mail train for Belfast which at present leaves Dublin at 8.20 p.m. should start half-an-hour later.

The Postmaster-General would have no objection to the later start from Dublin, but it would be necessary, in order to avoid serious delay to the mails throughout the district served by this train, that the present time of arrival at Portadown should be maintained.

If the railway company can arrange this without any expense to the Post Office, we shall be happy to alter our arrangements accordingly.

Yours very truly,

(Signed),

GRANARD

The Right Hon. Lord Fisher.

APPENDIX No 5.

LETTER from IRISH GOVERNMENT transmitting copy of a report made to the Board of Works by Mr. R. H. LEVESEY, C.B., into the working of the West and South Clare Railways.

No 19450.

DUBLIN CASTLE,
7th September, 1907.

SIR,—I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to state, for the information of the Vice-regal Commission on Irish Railways, that His Excellency in May last requested the Board of Works to institute an in-

quiry under Sec. 7 of the Railways (Ireland) Act, 1890, into the working of the West and South Clare Railways, the Board being advised that the above section applied to these lines.

Mr. R. H. Levesey was accordingly instructed to carry out the enquiry, and has now submitted his report.

The railway company, while affording facilities for the inspection, contended that the section in question did not apply to their lines, and the law officers of the Crown concur in that view. His Excellency is, therefore, precluded from taking further action under the section, but he desires me to transmit to you, to be laid before the Commission, the accompanying copy of Mr. Liversy's report.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) J. S. DODDINGTON.

The Secretary to the Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways,

13, Stephen's Green, North, Dublin.

(Copy of Mr. B. H. Liversy's Report referred to above.)

COMMERCIAL HOTEL,

DONOGAL,

4th July, 1907.

Re West and South Clare Railways.

SIR,—In accordance with the directions of the Commission of Public Works, contained in your letter of the 4th June (1902-07), I beg to say that I have made a careful examination of the West and South Clare Railways, and have also gone fully into the half-yearly accounts for the three years ending 31st October, 1906.

I will first deal with the Secretary and Accountant's Department in Dublin. Thus I found well organized, and the work of the office satisfactorily carried out. Mr. Kennedy, the Secretary, has only two assistants at salaries of £75 and £25 per annum respectively, his own salary being £300 a year, but out of this he has to pay the rent of the Dublin office, i.e., £25 a year, leaving his net income £275.

The Traffic Department, under Mr. P. Sullivan, known, appeared to be satisfactory, and I could not say it could be much improved.

Small reductions in the staff might be made, such as the porter at Crossin being dispensed with, where there is not sufficient work for two men, and one or two other stations might have the staff reduced, but they would not materially affect the net earnings.

The locomotive, carriage and wagon and permanent way departments are run very extravagantly, and it is in these that any real saving could be made.

Locomotive Department.

The cost of locomotive running on the West and South Clare lines for the year ending 31st October, 1906, was £64, per train mile, and for locomotive repairs for the same period £368, per train mile.

Had these lines been worked at the same rate as the Donegal Railway, the respective costs would have been 5½ and 34, per train mile, and the saving would have amounted to £2,463 for the periods mentioned.

Permanent Way

The total cost for maintenance of way, works, stations, and buildings on the West and South Clare lines for the year ending 31st October, 1906, for the fifty-three miles was £23,274, equal to £101. 8s. per mile of line.

The cost for same on the Donegal line for the year ending 30th April, 1906, was for 106½ miles £8,049, equal to £67 12s. 6d. per mile of line.

If the West and South Clare Railways had been worked at same cost, the saving for the year ending 31st October, 1906, would have been £2,849 12s. 6d.

The West and South Clare Railways pay the gangers on permanent way 14s. per week, and the surface men 12s.

The Donegal Railway pay the gangers 12s. per week and the surface men 14s. per week, so that the saving shown would have been considerably higher if the Donegal Company paid same rates.

In addition to the ordinary platelayers on the West and South Clare lines, of which there are fifty-three men, being one man per mile, and which is more than sufficient for a narrow gauge line, I found an extra staff averaging thirteen men, were practically constantly employed on the permanent way to do work which should be done by the ordinary platelayers or surface men. The cost of this extra staff for the year ending 31st October, 1906, was £261 10 6d. This is totally unnecessary.

Mr. Barrington, C.N., Larneick, receives a salary of £200 per annum, and in addition he was paid £105 4s. 4d. for expenses for the year ending 30th April, 1907, which includes 10s. per week for clerical assistance.

Of course Mr. Barrington is non-resident; but he or his assistant pay visits at intervals.

There is a permanent way inspector at Ennis at £117 a year. £104 should be sufficient.

There is also a storekeeper at Ennis at £204 a year. Half this would be quite enough.

So far as the permanent way, locomotive, and carriage and wagon departments are concerned, they are run very extravagantly. I do not blame Mr. Carter, the resident locomotive engineer, as I understand he is under Mr. Barrington's orders, and has to carry out the latter's instructions.

Although there are quite sufficient carpenters and painters at Ennis Station for such a line, there is a carpenter and painter also stationed at Midtownshelby Station. They are not required.

The gross working expenses on the West and South Clare lines for the year ending 31st October, 1906, were £21,441, being an average of £404 10s. per mile of line (fifty-three miles).

The gross working expenses of the Donegal line for the year ending 31st May, 1906, were £24,921 1s. 1d. for 106½ miles, average being £236 per mile of line.

Had the West and South Clare Railways been worked at the same cost as the Donegal line the saving would have amounted to £2,475 for the year 1906, and this may be taken as the average for the past three years.

I consider it better to take the Donegal line for comparison for working costs, as it is a properly fenced-in line throughout, whereas the Cligher Valley and Cavan and Leitrim run practically on the highway, and are more traversed than a railway. There is no comparison between the two lines, i.e., Donegal and West and South Clare, in other respects. The former has more numerous and much better stations; the permanent way is also far superior. The gradients are also heavier than on the West and South Clare Railways.

The amount paid in directors' fees and expenses for the three years ending 31st October, 1906, was £445 8s. 6d., being a yearly average of £222 1s.

I find the actual loss on the two lines for the three years ending 31st October, 1906, amounted to no less than £26,671 10s., being an average of £23,280 10s. per annum to be made good by the balance, half of which loss, so far as relates to the dividend, is recovered by the Treasury.

I may remark that in taking out the gross working expenses of the West and South Clare lines, as compared with the Donegal Company, I took into account the fact that an amount of £1,645 14s. 2d. had been charged to revenue on the West Clare accounts for the six months ending 31st October, 1906. This I considered in making the comparison had been set off in the Donegal Company's accounts by the increased same paid in rates and taxes and law charges, which exceed the West and South Clare by about £750. Then there was £400 charged to renewals of locomotives and permanent way, besides increased expenditures under several other heads, notably, compensation and new sea wall.

I had almost overlooked that I made inquiry, and found the complainant had written to the Board of Trade withdrawing his complaint, as you will see from the accompanying copy of letter from the Board of Trade, dated 21st May, to the Secretary of the West Clare Company.

In the meantime Mr. Dudley, the company's solicitor, and the secretary had been directed by the Board to go to Moyasta, and personally inquire into the matter, which they did. They found there was no foundation for Haug's allegations, and the latter declined to have anything further to do with it. It appears to have been personal spite.

I beg to remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) B. H. LIVERSY.

The Secretary,
Office of Public Works, Dublin.

P.S.—I must return my thanks to Messrs. Kennedy and Sullivan, who very kindly afforded me every facility.

APPENDIX No. 6.

COMPLAINT from the TOWN TOWN Commissioners, dated 28th October, 1907, as to unsatisfactory train connections at Athenry.

(Copies of three Letters addressed to the Vice-Royal Commission by the Town Town Commissioners and the Managers of the M. G. W. and Gt. S. & W. Railways.)

I.

TOWN COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE, TOWN,

5th October, 1907.

SIR,—I am directed by the Town Town Commissioners to communicate to you, to be laid before the Vice-regal Commission on Railways, a serious grievance which the people of this district suffer owing to the Midland Great Western Railway system not being practical to time-table. Trains too often arrive at Athenry considerably behind time, so that passengers from Dublin for Town miss the Great Southern and Western train, and have to wait at Athlone for the night, or drive home a distance of fourteen Irish miles. Recently a Town lady was thus left there, who, in darkness and drizzling rain, had to grope her way from the station to a friend's house at the town.

The Town Commissioners respectfully ask the Vice-regal Commission to note this grievance, and request the two railway companies to act harmoniously for the public convenience.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOHN GYNN,

Town Clerk.

George E. Shanahan, Esq.,

13 St. Stephen's Green, N., Dublin.

II.

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF IRELAND.

MANAGER'S OFFICE, BROADSTONE STATION, DUBLIN.

18th October, 1907.

M 18, 117—1907B.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter (2116-07) of the 8th inst., enclosing extract from a statement furnished to the Vice-regal Commission by the Town Town Commissioners.

I understand the complaint refers to our 4.15 p.m. train from Broadstone, which is timed to connect at Athenry with the G.S. and W. Company's train to Town. Our train is due at Athenry at 8.30 p.m., and the G.S. and W. Company's train to leave for Town at 8.25 p.m., and the understanding is that the G.S. and W. Company's train shall wait fifteen minutes for the arrival of our train. I am sorry, however, that on several occasions recently our train has missed the connection owing to exceptionally heavy passenger traffic, due principally to the large number visiting the International Exhibition, and the circumstances have been quite exceptional. The matter is receiving my attention, and I anticipate that the connection will now be maintained, and that no further cause for complaint will arise.

For your information I enclose copy of letter which I wrote on the subject to Mr. Gynn, Clerk of Town Town Commissioners, on the 8th inst.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant.

(Signed) J. TAYLOR

The Secretary,

Vice-regal Commission on Irish Railways,

13 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

(Copy of letter referred to by Mr. Tatties.)

28th October, 1907.

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 5th inst., and regret very much the delays which occurred to our down 4.15 p.m. train. The passenger traffic recently has been exceedingly heavy, owing to the Exhibition excursions and other causes, and I feel sure there will now be an improvement, and I trust the connection will not again be missed. I can assure you that the matter of the running of passenger trains is receiving my best attention.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) J. TAYLOR.

John Gynn, Esq.,

Town Clerk,

Town, Co. Galway.

III.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

TRAFFIC MANAGER'S OFFICE, DUBLIN.

T. M. 25367.

October 16th, 1907.

SIR,—Replying to your letter of the 6th inst. (2116-07), with extract from Town Town Commissioners' communication dated 8th inst.,

The connection with the Midland Great Western Company's 4.40 p.m. train at Broadstone at Athenry was not maintained on some few occasions in the month of September owing to the abnormally late running of that company's train.

I understand Mr. Taylor has written you on the subject.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) E. A. NEAR.

G. E. Shanahan, Esq.,

Secretary,

Vice-regal Commission on Irish Railways,
Dublin.

APPENDIX No. 7.

EXTRACTS from a Statement of the PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE promoting the construction of the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon Light Railway and Tramway, issued in 1884, furnished by the Rev. D. GRAY, P.P., Carrick-on-Shannon, representative of the Leitrim County Council, who gave evidence on the 11th October, 1907.

* * * * *

The working expenses of these Light Railways or Tramways may be fairly estimated at 50 per cent. of gross receipts. The result on the area of taxation would be as below at 4½ per cent. (If the guarantee be 5 per cent., it would be about 1d. more in the £1.)*

COUNTY.	Railway or Tramway	Miles	Capital	Estimated, 4½ per cent.	Gross Receipts at above	Net Receipts 50 per cent. G.R.	Half Deduct on Railway gross receipts, 25 per cent. would have to bear	Deduct saving on Repairs of Roads.	Net District Council would have to bear.	Valuation of District	Rate per £1 to be raised on District.
			£	£	£	£	£		£	£ s d	d
Cavan	No. 1.	9	45,000	2,100	3,574	1,634	261	Repairs of Roads cost £118 18s., say, saving £40.	221	80,149 8	1½
Leitrim	Nos. 3, 4, and 5.	28½	154,300	6,890	13,244	6,122	443	Repairs of Roads cost £102, say, saving £143.	257	69,535 5	1
Roscommon	No. 2.	16½	49,000	2,205	4,192	2,096	54	Repairs of Roads cost £34 10s. 6d., say, saving £120	-	15,177 9	5d.

A limited liability company has been formed and registered under the Companies Acts with a capital of £300,000 in 60,000 shares of £5 each. It is proposed to ask the Grand Juries of Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon to approve of a guarantee at a rate not exceeding 5 per cent. per annum upon the capital required, which is £351,000, for the several undertakings; and whatever loss may be incurred, if the receipts of the company do not give the guaranteed dividend, the Treasury will be bound by the Order in Council to bear one-half. The guarantee to be by such portions of the baronies as the Grand Juries may determine; but the promoters, being desirous to place clearly before the ratepayers what they consider would be a fair area, have suggested a district. Only those who will be benefited by the lines are proposed as the guarantors; they will perceive by the above table that whilst the guarantee is absolutely necessary in order to obtain the advantages of the Tramways Act, they will not, as soon as the traffic is carried, run any great risk. The advantages being so great, will more than a hundredfold counter-balance this risk, and even if the receipts in the first year or two should not equal the dividend guaranteed, the Tramway Act fully provides that every penny so advanced shall be repaid out of future earnings of the line to the guarantors.

It is anticipated that a very large amount of traffic will be derived from coal within the district. The turf around Ballinacorney has been entirely worked out, and the question of fuel is becoming a very serious matter. At present the towns of Bawnboy, Mohill, Carrick-on-Shannon, and Boyle are supplied with coal from the Arigna Valley or neighbouring pits, which are worked in a most primitive manner. The output during last year from these pits was 7,400 tons.

* Residents contiguous to the line of route will be particularly benefited by having means afforded

them of easily attending both markets and fairs of the several towns through which the line passes, as (unlike the ordinary railway trains) the tramway trains will stop at convenient places to pick up and set down passengers, and, whenever the traffic demands it, sidings will be provided, so that waggons may be loaded and unloaded with goods traffic, avoiding lengthy cartage.

"The several very influential public meetings held at Ballymacnoll, Mohill, Drumshebbie, Ballylarnan, and Boyle, to consider the project, supported as it was by liberal subscriptions to the Guarantee Fund for the preliminary expenses (a list of which is annexed), is sufficient proof of the wide feeling of the community in favour of the project; and it should be remembered that the present Provisional Committee is acting entirely with a view of carrying out the project as it will suit the country, and in its interests as economically as possible. The company is not bound to any contractors or financiers, and hope to carry out the project as a cash transaction, and to get the capital at 4½ per cent. The line has been laid out and the estimates are framed by Mr. Barton upon this basis, and are therefore low.

"And by the Order it is proposed that the Board shall consist of twelve directors—two to be nominated by the Grand Jury of Cavan, four by the Grand Jury of Leitrim, two by the Grand Jury of Roscommon, and four by the shareholders, thus giving the guarantors a majority, and the line will thus be in the control of those representing the district. This is of great importance as securing to the district that the monies raised will be judiciously expended and in its interests."

* Note.—For the half-year ended 1906, or sixteen years after working, the line earned £1 11s. 6d. per week per mile gross, and net after reduction for working expenses 1s. per week per mile; and working expenses 50 per cent. of the gross receipts; for the whole year 2½ per cent.

APPENDIX No. 8.

STATEMENT as to the Guarantee in respect of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway, handed in by the Rev. D. GRAY, F.R. Carrick-on-Shannon, representative of the Leitrim County Council, during his examination on the 11th October, 1907.

CAVAN AND LEITRIM RAILWAY.

The capital stands at £190,585—5 per cent. guaranteed. Government contributes nearly 2 per cent. on whole line, or £3,795 a year, which, capitalised at 5 per cent. (same as Tralee and Dingle line), would represent a sum of £185,500.

If this was paid over to reduce capital at the present market price of about 30 per cent. over par, it would buy out £95,000 of the stock, leaving the capital then at £95,585, on which the ratepayers would have to pay the whole 5 per cent., or a sum of £4,779 a year (assuming line only earns its working expenses).

At present the ratepayers are paying very nearly 3 per cent. on £190,585, or a sum of £5,717 a year. There would be a saving of (£5,717, minus £4,779) £938 a year. The valuation of taxable area in Leitrim, £64,035 at 1d. in the pound, equals £656; and the valuation of the taxable area in Cavan, £34,030 at 1d. in the pound, equals £333. So that a saving of £938 a year on the whole line would represent, for Leitrim, £625, or 2½d. in the pound, and for Cavan, £313, or 2½d. in the pound. And Leitrim would be liable to pay, as compared with the present (13½ minus 2½d.), 9½d. in the pound, and Cavan (5d. minus 2½d.), 2½d. in the pound.

APPENDIX No. 9.

MEMORANDA transmitted by Rev. J. MEEHAN, C.C., Kilmoe, County Cavan, representative of the Leitrim County Council, as supplementary to the evidence given by him before the Visegrail Commission on the 11th October, 1907.

I.—REBATES OR "DISCOUNTS."

The pretty extensive existence of rebates admits, I am persuaded, of no reasonable doubt. This is the irritating discrimination against the small trader which, some years ago in the United States, raised a storm that at last has apparently swept it away for good and all. Business morality in these islands may not have grown so unshaking, but I fear it is but little less lax. It is true universally, those that have, more shall be given to them, and they shall abound; those that have not, even that which they have shall be taken from them. In England under, amongst other things, the enlarging influences of a monarchy and of old traditions, the "slightly dollar" is not just everything in life. Still it remains sufficiently seductive.

About 75 per cent. of the traffic in these countries is said to be carried at "special rates." If this means—and it is ambiguous enough—at rates that fall short of the full amount allowed by Act of Parliament, then the serious complaint remains that the residual 25 per cent. of traffic is burdened with charges which, as the Select Parliamentary Committee of 1893 expressly declared, were never intended to be put on except in the extreme of cases. The Irish managers' stereotyped answer to all reclamations about exorbitant charges is, "They are not as high as we are empowered to go." In reality this is no answer. But Acts of Parliament are notoriously both obscure and bewildering, and merchants do not seem to have more than a nodding acquaintance with even such slender protection as they afford. It is again the amateur contending with the expert. There is pressing need for more simplicity.

Railway legislation is built up on an erroneous view of the circumstances of the traffic. "It is now," states Waghorn—perhaps the greatest living authority on the subject—"complicated and intricate to the last degree." Different provisions overlap; one Act amends another without distinctly repealing the amended provisions; every year some fresh statute still further complicates what is already too complicated. It is admitted that no justice can reasonably be expected to be done as between railway company

and trader so long as the statute law is allowed to remain in such a state of bewildering confusion. There is an imperative call for the codification of the existing conflicting Railway Acts, or perhaps, better still, for the sweeping away of the whole array of them—4,000 or so in number—and the substitution of one good comprehensive Act. The great railway specialist just named is himself oftentimes, as he confesses, quite as much at sea as is the amateur or the "man in the street."

But rebates are quite another matter. One thing at least is clear and definite—they are rigorously prohibited by these Acts. The law has already striven to secure justice for all and favours for none. Rebates directly run counter to it. A draper or a tweed manufacturer may give a yard of broadcloth to one man for 10s., and, if it so pleases him, may cut off a yard of the same web for the next man at 10d. Nobody can say nay to him; it is his own affair. Not so with the railway companies. If a company sells any part of the monopoly of transport conferred on it by Parliament at different prices to different customers, the public have a perfect right to demand the why and wherefore of it. Railways, according to the not unfriendly Mr. Aspinwall, who has devoted several books to the defence and glorification of the English and Scotch ones, are shops with practically a licensed monopoly for the sale of an article of public necessity, viz., transportation. "As such, the public have a natural right to overhaul their accounts."†

Englishmen know their own interests best. We stop short of the importance of debating or even suggesting to them. Irishmen, it is true, are not supposed to know their own business, whether public or private, best. It is Englishmen, though they know as much about the matter as they do about systems of socialism in Southern nations, that are far better what suits us. So they assume, and really believe, in this matter of rebates we are concerned nearly so far as they affect Ireland.

When the Irish struggling trader is running against the larger one, the second rebate is the additional handicap that is helping to leave him hopelessly out of the race. Compared to the big English and Scotch

* Waghorn—*The Law Relating to Railway Traffic*, 1906, pp. 1 and 125. Joint writer with Sir Edward Doyle, B.A., M.P., of the standard work, *Law of Railway Traffic*.

† *The Railways and the Trades*, p. 178.

wholesale firms and the great English manufacturing companies, we in this island are all doing business only in a small way. There are grounds for at least suspecting that the English railways, and not very improbably Irish ones as well, favour the former in this shady way once and above the exceptional and strictly not illegal advantage they insure them by the English manipulated through rate. Some of these grounds I am free to point out.

On the one hand, should one have been told by economists for English railways that, provided they can not succeed in reducing an Irish merchant to have his goods booked by the route they represent, they are at liberty, as a last shot, to try a judicious promise of a secret drawback. On the other hand, should one know of an extensive cattle-dealer receiving from the accredited agents of an English railway company "discounts" of considerably over £20 at a time, he can scarcely any longer doubt that the average English railway conscience does not react to this delinquency. Manifestly, too, the traffic of a great English manufacturer would be worth hooking when that of the small Irish fry would not be worth angling for. It will be pretty difficult to be persuaded with this before one that, generally speaking, English business morality is regulated by a much stricter code of principles.

This is not arguing by a jump from point to case. We rather see that shops are open, that their travellers are abroad, that an occasional customer shops in and out before our eyes, and we infer from all this that it is unlikely that these shops are not doing some business. "The well-known custom of the English railways," states Jones (p. 263), "is to promise to carry out the spirit of the law, . . . but they make differential rates by allowing large rebates and discounts; and there is probably no company that has not got secret arrangements of this kind."

It is well known that the big corporations and trusts of the United States were unblushingly guilty of this fault in the face of quite as many and much more rigorous laws prohibiting and penalizing it. The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, in 1905, the American Sugar Refining Company, in 1906, and "the heavy oil offender,"¹ as Ripley calls it, the Standard Oil Company, this very year, were among many other corporations convicted of it in the Federal Courts. Naturally, there is an extreme difficulty in getting at secret, mutually beneficial contracts. Acts of Parliament can with difficulty reach them. They might as well pocketfish fishes swimming, or shark-oiling garbage. They are beneath their sphere of vision. English laws, I believe, are not intended to bind in conscience except indirectly to discharging the penalty inflicted for the breaking of them. If it can be supposed that "the question of the sin" is waved away as but a light burden, then one is prompted to consider that big English corporations, well hardened in the industrial struggle, would be afflicted with but few qualms of conscience in living by the easy standard of virtue aimed at by their confederates on the Western side of the Atlantic. Like them, they might feel small reluctance in using, as Ripley puts it, "their size and power as a club to force the carriers to grant secret favours"² denied to the ordinary producers.

A glimpse at the past leads to the same conclusion. In 1837 the "Merchants, clothiers, and fullers" of Tiverton, beaten in a fair field by the mere Irish, petitioned Parliament against the abuse of this Kingston having woollen manufactures of her own. The interested manufactures of Tiverton and several other British towns joined in the clamour. In June of the following year the Lords and Commons of England presented an address to His Majesty—William III—praying for the suppression of such Irish oppression, and His Majesty was graciously pleased to hearken to their prayer. Mandates were issued, constitutionally and unconstitutionally, against the young but vigorous Irish manufactures. The innocents were mercilessly slaughtered. British fair-play, about which we often hear, may be something more robust, something more than a mere phrase to-day. Englishmen may be better. Possibly. But under stress of any trade rivalry, we could scarcely hope that the countrymen

of the fallers of Tiverton and Tiverton would have very much squeamishness in strengthening themselves by some of the mispractices of cheating—if they can in safety secure them—and some of the extra additions of their American cousins. As has been shown, it is not improbable they are within their reach should they care to stretch out their hands. Should it be established that Irish railways grant, and big Irish merchants receive, them, we may be sure that some English railways and merchants are not above it. It would be something not unlike some hypocrisy to profess the contrary.

Between English manufacturer and Irish manufacturer (if we have such) these secret rebates would intensify the disaster of the through rate. Between Irishman and Irishman they are unfair and unjust.

The proofs of the existence of the practice, which I am not free to put forward, are, in my own opinion at least perfectly conclusive. The larger Irish merchants have begun to expect them. In a letter before me, the rebates are, in perfect good faith, called by the commonplace business name of "discounts." This letter is not written by a small trader: The weaker brethren driven to the wall scarcely ever hear tell of them. The following I put forward as a definite but less doctrinal instance.

Like Collooney and many others of these sections, Ballynato Co-operative Agricultural and Dairy Society sells to its members every year hundreds of pounds' worth of artificial manure. For years it bought these manures from the manufacturers—Mewers, O'Keefe and Company, Dublin. The carriage for the 120 miles was 2s. 6d. per ton at six-ton lots. This, too, is the present rate, as supplied the writer by the secretary of the carrying company—the Midland Great Western Railway. But another firm of Dublin manufacturers advertised the article, carriage paid, and its price at Ballynato was to be enhanced by barely 5s. per ton, as representing the carriage, "based on existing railway rates." They so knocked out their competitors. The goods are carried under precisely the same conditions as formerly, and to the same amount. The second company sends and sent round leaflets and pamphlets wholesale, showing the lower cost of carriage. Thus is the rate indicated in the editions of this year. This is what has been several times actually paid. It is not quite impossible, indeed, that the second firm is itself at the loss of the difference between the carriage as written down in the railway rate-book and as published in their pamphlets. Neither the writer, however, nor anybody he knows, is prepared to believe it.

Of course the railway company does not always promise the rebate in such a crude fashion as handing back so much hard cash. What is the distribution of traders' discounts to large merchants and large cattle-dealers, which has recently been publicly acknowledged, but a discrimination of the same kind? These are granted in accordance with the terms of an unpublished rule, that is kept pretty well in the dark, but granted in a rough and ready—perhaps railway people would call it a liberal—fashion. They are withdrawn in the same rough and ready style. Should the trader be discovered sending his consignment otherwise than by the pass route, or otherwise offending, it would soon be found out that he was not entitled to one. They constitute, therefore, a blow on his forehead—we do not go so far as to call it a snipe.

What, again, is the prompt settlement of a claim for damage set in by a heavy merchant and the ignoring of haffing of one presented by a weighing but another form of discrimination? All should be placed on perfect terms of equality. To this the public have a right under Act of Parliament.

For merchants there are, as far as I can understand it, four or five different rates. There is, the goods remaining a constant, the small parcels rate, the cart rate, the ton rate, the wagon rate, and, perhaps even in Ireland, a fifth, namely the train-load rate. The prohibition of those and of the classes and of the manures, at least between Irish towns, in one hand-book would be—it may be remarked—for outsiders as the crooked of order out of chaos, or of light out of darkness. A trader sitting at his desk in his office could

¹ *Railway Problems*. Edited, with an Introduction by W. S. Ripley, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, Harvard University (Olsen & Co., Boston and London). Introduction, p. XII.

² *Railway Problems*. Introduction, p. XI.

³ In 1905, for instance, Collooney Society sold £391 worth, in 1903, £1,152 worth.

⁴ Two witnesses who straightforwardly advised otherwise are of the five big railway before the Commission soon afterwards lost their Trader's tickets. To one of the two it was subsequently—without, I understand, application—restored. His was an Irish M.P., and had still a sting.

them as mere make out his freight charges. This has been done in France and in Australia: it can be done. But, unless authorised by the supreme authority, and in most exceptional circumstances, there should be no departure from the published rate, whether as printed in the convenient form suggested, or, as at present obtain, written out in fair sized hand in the station rate-book. Thus, by the way, is a volume that not one in a thousand ever sees or asks to see. A commission over and above this, without any accruing economy in transit, on account of, say, the aggregate yearly amount of freight is, I submit, inadmissible. To borrow the words of Judge Abbotson of the Supreme Court of the United States, in his famous decision against "the heavy old offender" before mentioned, a "rebate on account of volume of business merely is "a discrimination in favor of capital," "a violation of that equality of rights guaranteed to every citizen, and a wrong to the disfavored person." "The principle is opposed to sound public policy," and "would drive out all enterprise not backed by overwhelming wealth." "A legitimate judicial opinion coincides with this. In a recent case against the Midland of England, tried by the Railway Commission, the presiding judge declared that if bulk of traffic was to be taken into consideration the law against undue preference would gradually be gone away with."

The United States was the great home of personal or business favoritism. In part by such shady practices Rockefeller's thousands grew into millions. The Elkins Act of 1903, greatly increasing the penalties for departure from the published rate, was for a while thought to have put a stop to it. But American ingenuity soon drove a coach and four through the Act. "Various investigations by the Inter-State Commerce Commission since 1904," writes Professor Ripley in his book published this year, "have uncovered intricate methods of evading even this most drastic prohibition." "If last year's (1906) Report of the United States Commissioner of Corporations is anything to go by, the number and elaborateness of the devices thus have been adopted to evade the statute. It is also suggestive as showing what at the present moment in these countries may be doing under our very eyes, and we need seeing it. These revelations as well as the exhibitions of railroading chicanery in the Federal Courts hurried on American legislation. Last year the Elkins Act was strengthened by the Inter-State Commerce Act of 1906. This amending Act, which passed the Senate with but three dissenting votes, renders the giver and receiver of a rebate liable to imprisonment as well as a fine, and directs the forfeiture of three times the favour secured. Furthermore, common carriers are forbidden to give directly or indirectly, and everybody else is forbidden to use, any Inter-State free ticket or pass. "Public opinion," declares Professor Ripley, "is unanimous in the demand that railways, as common carriers, enjoying inestimably valuable privileges by authority of the Government, shall accord substantially equal treatment to all shippers alike, as they great or small." "If the public in this country but gave full attention to the question, they too would be equally determined on this. Their ideal is that rates should be uniform, steady, and reliable, and, if possible, easily intelligible. Unsteadiness and lack of uniformity or reliability reduce business enterprises to something of the nature of lottery ventures."

It remains yet to be seen whether even this legislation will effect its purpose in the United States. It has, at all events, succeeded, as this dispassionate Harvard University Professor of Economics indicates, in leading off the possibility of State ownership of the American railways becoming a great political issue as seen in 1903.

Some kindred Act might answer this country. To use the words of Judge Willes, Parliament has as yet dealt with the matter "with a faltering hand." Our railway managers, I am sure, would at least freely admit that precaution is better than cure. As the practice of relating is a distinct breach of faith on the part of, perhaps, a small number towards the general body the general body would be only too glad if it were borrowed. But what would suit as best of all would be the nationalisation of all the railway

systems which, as far as Ireland is concerned, would remove the temptation to such practices, and render the enactment of any such Act unnecessary.

II.—IRISH RAILWAYS.

PROPOSED TERMS OF FINANCE.

(Table based on the Board of Trade Returns for the year 1905.)*

—	Paid-up Capital.	Average Rate of Dividend or Interest.	Equivalent value in rounded 2½ per Cent. Irish Railway Stock.
First Class Securities —			
(1) Debentures, ..	25,472,980	3 77	25,426,180
(2) Guaranteed, ..	6,021,280	4 46	5,965,272
(3) Loans, ..	585,593	4 97	585,018
Second Class Securities —			
(1) Preference, ..	30,487,386	3 97	30,008,512
Third Class Securities —			
(1) Debentures, ..	15,114,121	4 80	14,602,708
Total (at 12½ per Cent.)			244,421,604
Total Net Receipts, 1905,	21,447,590 (a)		
Total Interest, ..	21,453,684 (b)		
Difference between (a) and (b)	6,094		

* The Tables based on the Board of Trade Returns for 1905, on page 20, Minutes of Evidence.

1. The figures in the left hand column of the above Table are taken bodily from the Board of Trade's latest Returns—those for 1905. This Blue Book is in half-a-dozen respects an improvement on its predecessors, and clears up many obscurities.

As to the gross amount of Paid-up Capital, it includes £210,109 of subscriptions to other companies. This implies that this large sum is counted in the aggregate capital of £244,421,604 twice over. This gross amount is also swollen by "water" including all consideration of the well-watered stock of the Midland of England—to the extent of £277,481. Neither of these facts, however, will be found to affect in any way the conclusion.

2. As to the second column, Rates of Interest: It would, of course, be much better to take the averages for the last three or four years. But, again, an examination of these Returns for the individual securities will show that within the period they have been fairly constant. Consequently, it would make but very little difference. The length of the arithmetic calculation is all that differs from the adoption of the more equitable basis of interest.

According to the general principles of the system here outlined, a shareholder having, say, £100 stock paying 7 per cent. would exchange it for £200 stock in the New Irish Railway Stock; another possessing £100 returning 1½ per cent. would obtain but £50; and for a third possessing £100, whose dividend is 3½ per cent., there would be no conversion neither increase nor diminution of capital. A somewhat parallel case of conversion is the exchange made in 1903 by the Preference and Debenture Shareholders of the Belfast and Northern Counties for Midland 2½ per cent.

3. The security of the suggested Railway Stock would be that of the Irish Railways themselves amalgamated into one body, supplemented by the security of the whole of the rabalike property of Ireland, about £15,000,000 in value. This would place the responsibility where it ought to be placed. It would, besides, insure both confidence and economy, and give the first chance in recent years to the development of that most important, but almost

* *Railway Problems*, p. 65.

† *Waghorn*, p. 37.

‡ *Railway Problems*, Introduction, p. XI.

§ *Ripley*, p. XXVII.

obliterated national asset—national self-dependence. Equitable, and more than equitable provision should be made to ensure that all interests in the country should be represented in the governing body. That body would doubtless utilise in the actual management the best and most experienced railway talent available in the first place in the country, and in the second place procurable elsewhere. They would scarcely fall into the mistake of assuming that success alone is the index to ability or industry, or that the controllers of the biggest systems are necessarily the fittest men. A small shopkeeper in a little decaying Irish town may be fully as good a business man, and have done quite as much to deserve success, as a fortunate millionaire merchant in a big city. Much of the railway talent at present employed in this country has made the very utmost of their circumstances and surroundings. Had they larger opportunities they would have been equal to them.

4. No direct Government guarantee is here asked. But it is necessarily implied, and, if required, it would be had indirectly. Just as when called upon, the Government secure every corporate body in the enforcement of its contracts, so would it here assist any new corporate body legally established.

No Government advice even is suggested to be sought. All Government Departments in this country are notoriously extravagant. The standard of expense obtaining in wealthy England has been bodily transferred to impoverished Ireland. As to their general efficiency—we say nothing. But in Irish railway matters our practically foreign Government has committed so many sins of omission, and, when it did act, it has been so conspicuously unsuccessful and has so named and misnamed matters—as, for instance, the Light Railways of the 1855 Act*—that our experience does not inspire us with a too deep anxiety for much more of its railway guidance.

5. As to the figures of the third column.—The same income precisely as formerly would accrue on conversion to all first class investments, and there would result, besides, the enhanced certainty of dividend. Plainly this enhanced security is immeasurably superior to that of the best existing security for any one of the existing Irish railway investments, and much beyond the very best covering any British railway capital. Railways may be suspended by road motor service, or by flying machines if you like, but the country remains. Indeed the security above described could scarcely be much improved upon. It has been suggested, indeed, by one or two witnesses that, over and above this, the Government should be asked to directly guarantee the dividends. Were the Government to do so it would naturally be at our expense. Ultimately, should the occasion ever arise, it is in this country it would fall back upon, nor could this in so be regarded as anything but fair and reasonable. How, therefore, this Government-reinforced security would mean an advance on that just submitted, it is difficult to make out.

As to the second class and third class securities in the above Table (Nos. 4 and 5), 10 per cent. has been deducted from the present capital as a make-weight for the great improvement of the security. This amounts to the same thing as reducing the present interest by 10 per cent. of 15—not a very large reduction.

In the case of Ordinary shares or the third class securities, in consideration of the security for the present precarious dividend being raised from the lowest to the very highest level attainable, the interest has been further brought down by the difference between the existing rate of interest and the new Railway Stock's suggested rate. No stockbroker or financier would, I should expect, deny that the result is not only fair but very favourable to the holder of these Ordinary shares. The matter may be tested at first hand. Taking up the October, 1907, Investment Lists, and picking out the simplest example one can discover,† if we compare the market value of, say, Midland (England) £4 per cent. Debenture Stock with that of its D.C. Ordinary Stock yielding about the same interest—though generally (so for last year) 1 per cent. or so higher—while the former Stock, on latest date there given, sold at 72, the latter sold at 58. Here there is a difference of 14, in consideration solely of the difference of security.‡ The increased security of the proposed

Irish Railway Stock above that of the Irish Railway Ordinary Stock, as it now stands, might be expected to be estimated as at least as great as a half. The ordinary shareholder could not reasonably hope to obtain a present of this. In the commercial world there is always a *quid pro quo*.

A comparison of trust investments with ordinary sound investments yielding the same dividends will bear out this conclusion. But there is a further and more pertinent test which can be applied. On October 10th, e.g., Ordinary Shares of the three main Irish railways, the G.N., the G.S. & W., and the M.O.W., sold so cheap that the rates of interest the prices brought were respectively 24 11s. 7d., 25 1s. 7d., and 25 1s. 1d. On the same day the price of Irish National Guaranteed Shares of the fourteen railways constructed under the 1855 Act was so high that the yield barely averaged about 4 per cent. The certain advance in market value with all Ireland, and not scheduled congested baronies, that is, the very poorest districts of it, as a guarantee, would be more than a counter-poise to the suggested lowering of interest.

6. In the total of Preference Stock of Irish Railway Companies as summarised in the last, but not in previous Board of Trade Returns—No. 4 above—the Midland of England's estimated Irish portion is found incorporated. It is close on four millions. In conversion these four millions have been treated exactly like ordinary Irish Preference Stock, no better and no worse. The fairness of this might be challenged. Midland shareholders would be entitled not to cry up the value of their property quite as loudly as the Great Northern and the Great Southern and Western shareholders, and all the rest of them will be sure to choose theirs. Every man's goose are all swan. However, should Midland people feel dissatisfied with such equal treatment as is here roughly outlined, and should they undertake to maintain that their property stands on a higher level than corresponding Irish investments, they would appear bound to fall in making good their case.

The following facts have first to be got over. As these facts are public property, no harm can be done in here adding them.

(a.) Midland securities' descent in market value in recent years is much more marked than that of any other of the larger English railways. It is now even outdistancing that of the average Irish railway. As reported in the *Daily Mercury*, of August 23rd, 1907, the Chairman, Sir Ernest Paget, addressing the 187th half-yearly meeting of the shareholders, was constrained to bemoan this decline. "In 1897," he stated, "the price of the Company's Debenture Stock was 95. It was now 75. Preference Stock was 95, now it was 70. Preferred Stock was 84, now it was 63; and Deferred Stock was 85, and now it was 55." "The decrease in the value of capital was lamentable," emphatically declared the first shareholder that spoke to the opening resolution. The meeting was held on the 16th August last. By the end of September, Deferred Stock was two points further down. To-day its Stock Exchange quotation, as given in the daily press, is as low as 34½ buyers, and 35½ sellers. On its price, therefore, there can be grounded no claim for exceptional consideration.

(b.) Again, Midland Stock has been to an unique extent "watered," to use the vulgar term. Its capital is the largest of English railway companies. It stands at £121,864,410. But of this enormous sum, £73,788,755, that is £10,000,000 more than one-third of it, is "water." Put in another way, but £114,076,190 has been actually subscribed and expended on construction. The capital of the London and North-Western ranks next in order of size, but its £123,033,227 includes barely £18,667,022 nominal additions.

Watering means crediting Stockholders with the possession of Stock in excess of what was actually paid for. One of the motives prompting it is the assistance it affords in cloaking from the general public the real profits. The company with a large capitalisation and a consequently small rate of dividend has a plausible excuse for denying both to its

Midland of England's Stock.

Debtless mine

"Watering."

* See Second Report of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, Sections 36-45, for some proofs of this.

† Since October, 1907 this difference has gone on rapidly increasing.

employees higher wages, and to the public at large lower rates and fares. But leaving out of view the very much too clever practices which have disgraced American railway financing and even involved American life-giving, and whose introduction into these countries has been successfully barred by thoughtful British legislation, the main incentive to stock-watering is that the capital might be afforded the opportunity of reaping the benefit of the spirit of speculation, or, as some might go so far as to name it, the spirit of gambling. Six million pounds at 5 per cent., and £10,000,000 at 3 per cent. will yield the self-same returns. But the latter total will sell at a much higher price. Investors will more eagerly purchase it. There are differences of opinion as to whether the British law of 1903, which enforces publicity and responsibility in the organisation and management of corporations, really goes far enough and whether the Government should tolerate "watering" at all. One is rather inclined to hold it is all of a shady description, darkening and deepening under the less restrained freedom of the United States to positive and unmistakable frankness.

Nominal capital representing the margin of the discount of stock issued when cash is badly needed, as to be carefully excluded from this category. The amount so created is comparatively small, and is probably offset by the premiums on the smaller issues of more prosperous companies. But if watering, as explained above, be held to be worthy of condemnation, then the Midland is far and away the worst offender. This corporation, therefore, should feel almost about making further demands on investors' confidence.

(c.) Again, the Midland was constructed primarily for the convenience of coal from the rapidly developing collieries of the central counties to London. This traffic continues to be the main string to its bow. Should it relax or break, it would spell disaster for it. Both science and invention are very busy perfecting the utilisation of other and superior forms of energy. Every half-year a new patent is registered. The revolutionising process may not be far distant.

Notwithstanding this close connection with the coal-bearing districts, the Midland's rate of working expenses is high, absolutely and relatively, and growing higher. In 1899 it was 52 per cent. of the gross receipts; in 1905, 53.97 per cent., i.e., 97 per cent. beyond the average for England. For the last recorded half-year, ending June 30th, 1907, it has reached the highest water mark yet attained, 64.25. Owing, amongst other things, to the increasing cost of labour and the numerous Acts passed to insure against railway accidents, the expenses of all lines are year by year mounting up. The Midland, despite its exceptional opportunities, seems, if not to lead the van, to be among the foremost in the advance.

(d.) The Midland was the first to start carrying third-class passengers by all trains. That was away back in 1872. Three years later, under Sir James Allport's guidance, it abolished second-class carriages, and reduced first-class fares to second-class level; that is, its first-class fares are 52 or 53, and not 100 per cent. over third-class. These pioneer movements are said to have been successful. They are accordingly quoted as examples of enlightened progressiveness. But all the same the policy smacks of speculation. Ever since its birth, speculation is the recognised characteristic of the Midland among British railway systems. The Heysham is one of the latest of its enterprises. It is said to be a white elephant on its hands. It originally cost about £1,000,000, and the annual outlay since then expended on trying to keep the harbour free of silting sands is said to be enormous.

(e.) The Midland's capital is most complicated. Its Ordinary Stock is "split" up into two equal amounts—"Preferred" and "Deferred"—the latter intended as an attraction for the speculator. It then added water to the extent of a third almost equal amount. Upon its nominal increase the Inland Revenue Commissioners demanded the payment of stamp duty. It declined. After several battles fought out in the lower courts, the case was finally brought to the House of Lords. This ultimate tribunal, in 1902, confirmed it and adjudged it

to pay \$208,000 as stamp duty, besides the enormous costs of the prolonged litigation. Seeing that of its Preferred Stock as well—"Consolidated Perpetual Preferred Stock," indeed, as its full and correct title, if that be any consolation to the proprietors—more than one-third, too, is "water" (i.e., as much as \$19,765,821 out of \$55,555,500), and observing that its price, despite all its titles, has gone down as rapidly as above indicated, it is open to doubt if the Belfast and Northern Counties shareholders are to be congratulated on their bargain; or if they would repeat the selling of their Irish railway, and of a part of their country's independent prospects to an English Company, had they to do it over again. At all events they must, I think, recognise that their "Midland Consolidated Perpetual Preferred Shares" are, at best, no better than simple Preferred Shares in an ordinary struggling Irish railway company.

7. Whenever real business is meant a full audit Prospects and valuation of the individual Irish railways would of itself, naturally be an indispensable preliminary. The members of the Board of Trade Returns would become more and more manifest. They would be of little use, and were never intended to be of use in such a contingency. Before purchase an exhaustive and accurate inquiry would have to be made into the present value and future prospects of the different railways, and into the assets and liabilities of each company. This was done by the Railway Commission of 1887—a Commission appointed by Lord Derby's Government after the presentation to Parliament of the Report of the Devonshire Commission of 1885, and the ensuing acute Parliamentary debate. The 1887 Commission was asked to investigate all the facts which they might consider "that a prudent person or company would require to be made acquainted with as a preliminary step before embarking the question of purchase as a commercial speculation." This Commission reported on 20th April, 1888. Their statement, dust-laden and moth-eaten, may be found on the shelves of old libraries, side by side with the results of a further inquiry with which they were entrusted immediately afterwards, embodied in still another Blue Book.

Indeed, in the light of the fate of the multitudes of past Commissions, it requires no spirit of prophecy to anticipate, with fair confidence, the round of proceedings started by the present thorough-going Viceroyal Commission. They are pretty certain to run something like as follows:—

After two years' (1906-8) scrupulous investigation a Report (or a Majority Report) will be issued somewhere towards the end of 1908. Granted that it be favourable to nationalisation or reconstruction, a supplementary Commission of equally earnest men must needs be started on such labours as have just been referred to. It cannot be done without. This might be expected to happen in 1909, or may be in 1910. After a year or two's painstaking inquiry the Second Report will be at the disposal of Parliament. That, probably, will be somewhere about the year of grace 1911 or 1912. But by then the present Government will not unlikely be so modified that it will feel under no obligation whatever to do anything in the way of translating into action any of the recommendations. It will have precedents without number for masterly inaction. If, in the interval, there be a change of Government this goes without saying under Party Government with which we in these islands are blessed, the sound policy of one Government is the hobby of the next. The reports, one and all, will in their freshness serve to adorn the public libraries' Blue Book shelves, should space be found to crush them in. Another generation hence a fresh crop of laborious inquiries. Results—at the Greek Kakodai.

III.—THE IRISH CEMENT TRADE

After cattle Ireland's most important export trade is better. This may be established from the Department of Agriculture's books of statistics. The value of Irish exports in 1904 totalled £95,505,432, of which the value of this commodity was £2,325,515. The corresponding items for 1905 are £51,331,265, and £3,367,565. Better sent by parcels post is not included. Though there is a considerable trade, its amount is practically unascertainable.

* See Chapter Ia. Etc. by G. F. Adams.

For 1906, the estimated value of butter exported is still further up. Approximately it amounted to £3,500,125*. But it should be observed that the increasing figures cannot be taken to prove expansion of the trade, but rather that the compiler of these statistics is becoming more experienced in very arduous duties, and is consequently succeeding in obtaining fuller returns. The gathering of these statistics began after eighty years' disuse but a year or two ago. "The better figures," states the compiler, "are in all probability slightly under the quantity exported, as it is very difficult to get a complete record of such exports."†

At the present time, for this commodity as for everything else, the cities of England and of Scotland constitute our sole markets. In these markets the Lapslander enjoys equal privileges with the Cork man, Siberian, Canadian, Italian, Dutchman, Australian and New Zealanders are quite as much at home as the pure British subject, and elbow and jostle him. Russians and Danes are more particularly in evidence. The following table will afford some indication as to how the foreigner has thus invaded, and is bidding fair to monopolise, the British butter markets—

BUTTER IMPORTED, 1906.‡

From	Tons	Approximate Value
		£
Russia (including Iceland), ..	30,757	5,100,000
Denmark, ..	62,703	8,500,000
Other Countries, ..	112,892	12,860,202
Total Imported, ..	246,352	36,460,202
British, ..	25,824	3,500,125*

A ton of butter is worth, roughly, a little over £100. The average yearly production in the United Kingdom is estimated at 85,000 tons. Granted favourable circumstances, it is easily capable of being doubled or trebled.

In 1905 at least £13,000,000 paid for this one article of food was sent out of the country. Indeed, from statistics available it can be established that England yearly imports from abroad* £25,000,000 worth of butter, cheese, condensed milk and eggs, and about £10,000,000 worth of fruit and vegetables. These annual millions and millions go mainly to strengthen the rivaling foreigner.

Apart from any sense of duty or from any fellow-feeling for men who, as subjects of the same King, are shouldering side by side the same heavy burthens and taxes, it would appear, one may venture to say, rather short-sighted English Statesmanship not to strenuously foster the farm produce trade of the home countries. To assist equally the foreigner and the subject is, indeed, unique philanthropy. No other Government pursues, and no other Government, I believe, ever adopted a like policy. But some day, when, amidst contending nations, the British crisis arrives, it will be rather Ireland, with its shrivelled-up produce industry, than Russia or distant Australia, that England will be driven to depend upon for feeding for a time its teeming population, and so securing a breathing space and chance of recovery.

There is nothing new, I may add, about this subscription. Some fifteen years ago the late Lord Balfour, one of the greatest Statesmen and diplomats that Ireland has given to England, on being created Chancellor of the University of St. Andrew's, Scotland, delivered a remarkable address. In the course of it he clearly outlined this danger to Great Britain. He saw it foreshadowed in the results from a single disaster to the great machine—Power of classic lines—Athens. The world is now as small as Greece was then.

Under the guidance of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society in the first instance, and of the Department of Agriculture in the second, Irish farmers have gone to very great trouble and expense in

building and equipping their creameries. As a result, these manufacturing are now as well fitted up with all modern requirements as any to be found anywhere. A few years ago the writer showed members of the British Dairy Association over an ordinary one of them. They acknowledged they had seen nothing better in Denmark. The succeeding year the same creamery, amongst others, was visited by a deputation from the Scottish Farmers' Association. They, too, considered it equally up-to-date. In Holland the writer certainly did not come across anything superior to them.

The trained managers, too, are now as well instructed, as careful, and as alert as the best of their Continental confreres. When Irish farmers are putting forth their utmost efforts, it is too bad that the railways, on whose aid they are obliged to depend, instead of actively helping them, should continue to blight their endeavours, and stand in the way of progress. The quality of the output is undoubtedly as uniform and as good as any to be had. But then, in competition with the article of foreign manufacture (a) it is charged higher freight, (b) it is in transit less carefully looked after, and (c) it is subject so frequently to delays that customers, however well-disposed, are deterred from having anything to do with it.

(a.) Higher Charges.

As has already been shown (p. 14—Evidence), the freights are now no lower than they were twenty years ago, and the description of many or most of them as "exceptional," if indeed seriously, certainly needs some explanation. As all the complaints got over in treating of another farm produce industry, the much blunder of an egg, apply with equal force to this, they need not again be rehearsed. The matter may, in consequence, be here dealt with very summarily. For fuller information, I beg to refer the reader to the Memorandum on the egg trade (p. 14—Evidence).

Freights to London.

From.	For premi- um differences in kilos	Rate per ton, butter	Observations
		s. d.	
1. Dromedary, 5 d. E. & S. R.	450	48 2	The Irish rates included in these three lists are all 0 s. 6, and supposed to be exceptional.
2. Loughs, ..	457	50 0	
3. Galway, ..	456	50 0*	Also from Dublin, Falmouth, Falmouth, Falmouth, for 1000 lb. an average allowance is made at 10 s. 6.
4. Dublin, ..	456	50 10	Some rates from Dublin, Cork, Galway, etc.
5. Dromedary, ..	454	51 0	There is a charge rate by Westport as 1000 lb.—but a long sea voyage is allowed as deductible for butter as for eggs.
6. Dublin, ..	517	55 10	The last two are the highest rates. The others are common.
7. Cam (Ireland), ..	—	20 0	All these rates are on the railway of London which is actually engaged in the trade.
8. Bakers (Denmark), ..	495	57 0	
9. New York, ..	1,120	42 0	
10. Montreal, ..	1,050	45 0	All the Continental rates to London are very cheap, as there is no water competition. It follows from these that the London market is probably closed against the ordinary Irish export.
11. Montreal, ..	1,050	45 0	
12. Wellington (N.S. Wales), ..	12,000	50 0	

* C. & D.

* Figures for 1906 kindly supplied by Mr. Adams, Superintendent of Statistics, Department of Agriculture (Ireland). Report not yet issued.

† Reply to an inquiry of the writer's.

‡ Board of Trade Returns.

To Manchester.

From.	Approximate distance in Miles.	Rate per ton, better.	Observations.
		s. d.	
1. Dronskair, S. & L. and G.N.	377	25 4	For Liverpool, 48 the lowest in the S. & L. up to Foundation are grouped under the rate. As Foundation the G.N. rate, current included, is just the same as from Dronskair.
2. Carlisle, N. & W.	322	—	See Kilmahon.
(a) By Dublin, ..	—	48 8	
(b) By Westport, ..	—	52 1	
3. Belfast, G.N. ..	274	43 4	G. & D. See Kilmahon.
4. Clifton, M.G.W.	345	49 8	
5. Castlereagh, N. & W.	342	50 0	Dollyhouse, Glenties, .., are also charged the rate.
(a) By Dublin, ..	—	45 0	
6. Rathfriland, ..	323	50 0	In No. 4, 50s. 0d. two tons paid by the 10. 10. 10. (Manchester), the weight of the latter being charged for.
7. Eglers (Denmark)	—	57 8	As in the previous list, all the rates up to the 4th are grouped, are designated as "Freight of Agricultural products." Travel of "Freight" in instances there have been compared with the station rate books and with the London railway rates, and in confirmed as the existing rates. They are all per gross ton. No reduction on this rate, except in No. 1, but delivery is limited.
8. Copenhagen, ..	—	45 8	
9. Wexham and Odense (Denmark), ..	—	47 8	
10. Midland, ..	—	47 0	
11. Eglers (Denmark), ..	—	50 0	
12. Montreal (Canada)	—	45 0	The maximum rate in this list was given on the authority of the London railway rates, which are actively engaged in the trade, according to them the No. 12 Montreal rate has been sometimes as low as the

To Glasgow.

From.	Approximate distance in Miles.	Rate per ton, better.	Observations.
		s. d.	
1. Dronskair, ..	377	25 4	O.R. Via Derby
2. Copenhagen, ..	—	50 0	The maximum inland rate for export is very low

It is worth noting that, as reported in the daily Press, the Government of Australia a few months ago signed a new mail contract with the Orient & S.E. Company. The annual subsidy agreed upon is £270,000. The new contract will begin to take effect in February, 1910. "The Commonwealth rate of 4d per lb. for butter," states the daily papers, "and 6d. per ton for carrying fruit will be paid." All ports in Australia are grouped together, it will be all the same to forward from Sydney in the east as from Perth in the west of the Continent. A fleet of five

or six magnificent new steamers of 11,000 tons burden each, fitted up with refrigerating chambers, will carry this produce to the English markets. Australian railways are already in the hands of the Australian Government, and are helping on the agricultural side they can—in other words, assisting them to knock out the unsupported Irish competitor.

It is also to be taken into consideration in these comparisons, that for almost all foreign butter traffic, as for Australian and also Canadian, cold storage compartments in transit and at the ports are available. For Irish traffic, they are a luxury rarely at its disposal. This much increases the difference.

Undoubtedly, could consignment or better merchant combine and put together wagon loads, somewhat after the fashion of the German forwarding agents, they might lower transit rates by fully 10 per cent., even as Mr. Ben, manager of the L. and N.W., speaking at Newport, on the 5th February, 1905, to a meeting of English agricultural societies, pointed out—by possibly as much as 10 per cent. But in practice, with our score of railway systems each having its own traffic, such full-blown co-operation is impossible. It has been often considered and as often rejected as unworkable. In Denmark, it is true, almost all butter is sold through *forbrugere*, and principally through one—the very successful Danish Co-operative Export Association.* But Denmark has what (through no fault of its own) we lack—half-a-dozen causes leading up to this. It has, particularly, the advantage of the very active assistance of its Government, both in organizing the export trade and in marketing it.†

Comparing, for instance, in the above lists the two last two rates, viz., that from Dronskair to Glasgow with that from Copenhagen to Glasgow, it will be observed that, looking at it under another light, the Irish rate does not exceed the Danish by more than a small fraction of a penny per lb. It has been, frequently suggested at the Commission that such trifling differences are scarcely worth talking about. But no one actually engaged in trade or commerce would, as we are convinced, maintain this.

What the wholesale merchant regards as not the lb. but the ten mile. Here two or three shillings is a large difference. But in this era of strenuous competition, the advantage of even the homogeneity part of a penny in the lb. in the rate is not to be despised. It may be quite sufficient to bowl over a competitor. Foreigners, in their shortsness, are, at all events, quite alive to such minutiae. "Certain valuable products and by-products of the German mines and iron-works," states a writer in the *Contemporary Review*, "in discussing the lesson of the German water-ways, and the more bulky products of the chemical industries in Germany can only be sold in Germany and abroad owing to the cheapness of transport by water, and in many cases the profit is cut so fine that an increase of the freight charges by about one-fifth of a penny per mile would inevitably kill important industries which it seems as at present killing the industries of countries at present competing with Germany." These statements are made on the authority of a Major Kun, who, according to the writer in the *Review*, is a leading authority on inland navigation in Germany. It is accordingly seen to be universally true, in commerce no less than in art or literature, "the little more" is "much," and the "little less" is "worse away"—a head may win the Derby. If our little industries struggling into life cannot have what every great industry in England and all the world over enjoyed in their infant stages, help and protection, they demand at least fair play. The manufacture of linen in one corner of Ireland, for example, is now strong and vigorous. It boasts it can defy the world, and would vigorously kick away from others the ladder by which itself did rise to such pre-eminence. It forgets it was well nursed just when it most wanted tending. Between 1712 and 1783, the fostering Irish Parliament lavished its attention upon it, bestowing on it premiums to the value of £226,815 §

* Of the imports from Denmark in 1904, for instance, 57 per cent. came from Co-operative societies. In Ireland there are 950 Co-operative societies, and their annual turnover exceeds £5,000,000.

† Belgium, Germany, etc., are equally at the back of their subjects. At the Musée Commercial at Brussels, conducted by the State Railway Department, all information as to correct prices of Belgium—and even of other countries—products in foreign markets, cost of transport, best routes, etc., may be obtained gratis on application, either in person or by letter. Belgium plainly does not take the contracted view that the function of a Government is merely protection of life and property, and the even distribution of justice. It attempts for the good of its subjects the performance of all acts which individual members of the public are, by themselves, unable to accomplish.

‡ Dec. 1894, p. 734.

§ History of the Commercial and Financial Relations, by A. K. Murray, D.Sc. (London), London, King & Son, 1897, p. 123.

No country in the world has built up a commerce and manufacturing industries under an unrestricted free trade, and it is pretty safe to say no country ever will. But a Government whose policy works out in suppressing the own subjects' enterprise and assisting its neighbours', in being at best avowedly as hostile to its enemies as to its friends, must be either drawing pretty near the end of its resources or else, as far as anyone can see, have rather much foolishness mixed up with its wisdom. The millennium has not yet arrived.

(3.) Careless Handling.

Complaints as to this are frequent. "We are at one with you regarding the quality of Irish butter," write, in a letter before me dated the 2nd November last, Messrs. Letham and Sons, Ltd., to the manager of a certain North-Western creamery, whose turn-over for the year 1906 amounted to £11,782. "We think it is well worth pushing, but when we get a shipment, such as you sent us, it goes a long way to stop buyers from handling Irish butter. Our Danish dairies invariably turn out right. . . . What you say is quite correct about your transient arrangements. They are inferior to Danish. The butter when it comes in here is in a dirty condition." "For some reason, particularly in warm weather, boxes frequently arrive broken, and the butter damaged in consequence," write Messrs. Clement and Sons, Glasgow, to the Kilkenny Co-operative Dairy Society, Limited, on the 14th June, 1907. "We should have done a much larger trade with Irish creameries had the condition of goods on arrival this side been satisfactory. In a large measure, careless handling in transit and a lack of uniformity in temperature throughout the journey are responsible." So write from York, Messrs. Alpin and Barrett, of the Western Counties Creamery, Limited, to the same Letham Society in a third letter before me, dated 17th of the same month. As Letham and Sons Co-operative Creameries, not to speak of other creameries in the same two counties, send annually between them to cross-Channel markets close on £150,000 worth of butter—in 1906, for instance, its value was £132,625—this matter is seen to be invested in their eyes with a very practical interest.

As to the lack or poverty of the provision of refrigerating arrangements for the carriage of this perishable commodity, it is to be remarked that it is in the heat of summer that this country's trade in it is heaviest. More than once the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) has censured the railway and steamship companies about it. Five years ago, the Liverpool Wholesale Grocers and Provision Merchants' Association, also made pressing representations to them. Farmers' societies and individual exporters here, of their own bat, being equally emphatic. The results of all this agitation are not conspicuous. Excluding fish wagons, it would be interesting to know how many refrigerators vans there are in the country, and where they are placed. In the Returns of Working Stock, No. 6 in the half-yearly reports, the Great Southern and Western is the sole company I can find that thinks it worth while acquiring them.

In the beginning of the year 1907 the Irish Home-stead, the recognised organ of the Irish co-operative movement, gave week after week numbers of cases of dairy societies' losses due to transit damage. Instances may be seen in the issues of January 19th and February 22nd. Singular inferences follow from the details. First, granting the damaged goods passed over three companies' lines, and assuming, what will be pretty sure to happen, that no proof is forthcoming as to which of the three is the culprit, in invoking the law you must war jointly the whole three of them. Next, at best, you devote merely one, the one against the other two will be dismissed. Their costs, of course, will be added on you. As witnesses must needs be brought from England or Scotland three costs cannot by any means be light. Your suit then works out this way.—You are awarded, say, £5 damage, the full extent of your claim, but you are out perhaps £10 in expenses. Naturally, next time your goods are lost or injured you put up with it as best you can. The Irish Co-operative Agency at Limerick has had such experience.

Again, let us suppose the consignor happens, for a woe, to be more fortunate, and can fashion the damage on a particular English system's employees. But it by no means follows that it is then plain sailing for him. This English carrier company may have

no office in Ireland—but two or three of them have. Should this be the case, the prosecution of the claim would involve the consignor in more expense and trouble than the whole thing would be worth. He will, naturally, be advised by his solicitor to drop the matter, and he will act wisely in doing so.

This, too, is not an imaginary case. It is typical of many actual occurrences. The farmers' paper referred to recalls many specific instances of such experience. Cases of eggs were lost, butter was pilfered, whole boxes of it were smashed up, in one case ten at a time. "The exporter grumbled," but he had to bear it. An Act of Parliament is clearly called for. But as the editor shrewdly surmises, we may be all "old men or old women" before it reaches the King's signature. In despair he advises another course. There the matter rests. As far as the Statute Book is concerned, Irish export produce may be lost, stolen, or destroyed. The law affords redress in theory, in a large number of cases none in practice.

It is not sought to be maintained that railway companies are wholly conscientious and will not sometimes (when well worked) make amends for losses for which they are responsible. As a matter of fact they do now and again. On August 2nd, 1906, for example, Kilkenny Co-operative Agricultural and Dairy Society, Limited, sent £78 worth of butter to Bristol. It succeeded in reaching Bristol on the 6th, but very much the worse for the journey. The consignee's claim in respect of it was after shewers of correspondence, paid. But it was not used the succeeding January, and then by no means as a right. Generally, however, the merchants on the other side adopt a much easier course. In the words of a letter before me from an experienced creamery manager, a gentleman who markets £12,000 worth of butter annually, and who is also secretary to the Irish Co-operative Managers' Association, Mr. de Looey, of Collooney, they almost invariably prefer "settling the Irish creamery to the trouble of going to law with the railway companies."

It should be noted that in such instances as the above, though a claim was paid promptly on the establishment and in full, that does not quite square the business. There still remains no amends for the serious business disarrangement that ensued, and the customer's consequent reluctance to run the risk of repetition of the misfortune if he can avoid it. Here it where the Danish consignor has the pull over us. His consignments, as Messrs. Letham and Sons, of Lough, put it in a letter already quoted from, "invariably turn out right," and turn up at the appointed time.

The writer's personal experience bears out all this. Last July, on my way through England for a vacation, I observed, for instance, in a Liverpool docks shed twenty boxes of butter. The brand indicated they came from Kilkenny. Two of them were as soiled as if they had been carried in an unclean cattle wagon. A few others were more or less broken. A few of them were only, as if the contents had been subjected to a high temperature, and were coming out. The boxes were all of the strong, recommended pattern. A wholesale Manchester merchant, to whom I mentioned this, instead of expressing surprise, described it as a not uncommon incident of the trade. On the 18th of the same month he said there had reached him from Glasgow Creamery thirty-five boxes of butter. They had been loaded at Ballyvaughan, and came by the M.G.W.R., Dublin Steam Packet, and L. and Y. They were equally battered, broken, and unsightly. An inspector of the L. and Y., who, on complaint being made, came to see them, I was informed, admitted the loading and the deterioration.

(c.) Delays.

In returning from vacation, the writer spent a day at Manchester and interviewed some of the wholesale butter merchants. Fresh from hearing Mr. Gibson's (of Limerick) evidence before the Commission, I made inquiries particularly about the methods of handling and about prompt arrival. They all complained on both scores, i.e., about the soiled condition in which many of the cross-Channel consignments reached them, and of what Mr. Gibson especially urged, perpetual delays. They were always nervous about the Irish butter reaching them in time; about the Danish they had no misgivings. As their stores are small delays especially put them out. Just as I was speaking to him,

* A large Liverpool importer of eggs, asked by the writer about breakages, replied:—"From Ireland they average 60 in 12 hundred, if only 35 or 40 we consider it very good. In the same number coming from Austria or Denmark, only 6, that is to say 48 in the hundred, covers the breakages." "What about delays from Ireland?"—"They're not a saint."

Mr. Cronin, of the firm of Cronin & Sons, was summoned away to the telephone. He informed the author that he regretted his Irish butter consignment has not yet arrived—it was fourteen hours overdue—but that not to disappoint him he had already despatched to his address some boxes of butter by passenger train. The difference in freight—he was quite used to this—Mr. Cronin himself paid. "This," he said, "is a sample of our difficulties in dealing with you. We would like to help you, but we can't. Your railways are all at fault. One is worse than another. I would give 10s. a cwt. more for Irish butter if I could be sure it would arrive as regularly as Danish."

Delays will occur once in a while under any and all circumstances. But here there is a recognised constancy in the irregularity. It is often due, I should expect, to some failure of transport from one railway company's premises to another. Unification should tend to lessen the liability to this. Last July, going up to Dublin as a witness before the Commission, I placed my travelling bag, containing my notes, properly labelled for Dublin in the guard's van at Maherhamilton. Passing from the S. and L. to the G.N. it stuck at Enniscullen. After much trouble and some expense I got it next day. This exemplifies what may occur.

Some years ago the hon. secretary of the Sligo Co-operative Conference Committee—a committee, by the way, which represents thirty-four working societies having an aggregate membership of 13,349 individuals—was directed to make inquiries as to how it was Danish butter was besting ours on the market. The writer happened to be secretary at the time, and accordingly wrote to Bolton and Glasgow. The answers of it were most carefully sought out by correspondents, and the views of the leading wholesale merchants in these two cities obtained. They all insisted on the two points just mentioned.

On this side, in local traffic delays are much too

common. In December last twenty-eight boxes of butter, received and receipted for at Ballymote Station on the 7th, were not delivered at Belfast on the 11th. Not, however, surprising since, though the journey is short, they had to pass over three distinct systems—the M.G.W., the S. and L., and the G.N. As is usual in delays, half-a-dozen middle expenses went skipping about in telegrams hunting them up. A supply of tobacco, ordered in view of a fair, may come when the fair is over; or a barrel of apples for Hallow Eve may, as happened, arrive on the 3rd or 4th November, when apples are a drug on the market. But there is never any redress. Should the trader, in his impatience, apply for it or complain, he is told in very polite language, if a big man, what amounts to, "Go to Jerobo!" Should he be a small man, the chances are there will be no picking or choosing of words about it. Certain Irish companies have, indeed, according to the traders, attained a distinct character for lack of civility to small customers. It is *Parvulus* with them.

For promptness and safety in delivery the Post Office is very much dependent on railways. That it should, notwithstanding, rise so manifestly superior to them arrests attention. Comparatively, its losses, rejections, and delays are not worth mentioning, and it has almost none that are untraceable. The unity of its system has undoubtedly to do with this. But it is also attributable, one should expect, both to the careful system of stamping and checking which afford a good chance of tracing a damage to the exact author, and also to the fact that the supervising officials, instead of being interested in settling, look most carefully and courteously into every individual case of complaint brought under their notice by any person however humble, and take steps to insure against its recurrence.

A leaf might, with advantage, be abstracted out of the Post Office note-book.

APPENDIX No. 10.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT transmitted by Mr. W. O'REILLY, D.L., Representative of the Louth County Council, as supplementary to his evidence before the Commission on the 12th October, 1907.

Referring to statements in my price of evidence concerning the Dundalk coasting business and the questions addressed to me on this point by Lord Pirrie and Mr. Sexton, to which I was at the time unable to give satisfactory replies, I have since made further inquiries, and have obtained the following information:—

1. That the coasting steamers have been crushed out, and the service discontinued.

2. That, as I said I feared would be the case, the railway company have re-imposed their higher fares; rates in particular, prior—one of the most general, if not the largest, import to Dundalk from Dublin—has been raised from the temporarily reduced rate of 6s. 6d. per ton to the former rate of 11s. 6d. Corn, the main product of the country, has been raised to its original rate. Both rises since October 1st.

3. Testimonies to whom I quoted the law, as explained to me by Sir Herbert Jekyll, that the railway company could not re-impose the higher rate, unless they could justify it on appeal to the Railway and Canal Commission, confirmed my view that such appeal was expensive, troublesome, and

insufficiently productive of result; and stated further that any such appeal on their part would be resented by the railway companies, who would probably make them suffer for it in some other way.

Referring to Q 23434, et seq., by Mr. Acworth and Mr. Sexton, to which any answers seem rather confused, I should like to be allowed to explain that I had in my mind not only might it be necessary to connect up loose ends of railway and contract others, but that, furthermore, reduction of rates might also be necessary in the interests of the country. The Allport Commission recommended an all-round reduction of 43 per cent. Such expenditure and reductions might be temporarily unremunerative. The same Commission considered that in eleven years the increased business would overtake the immediate loss. During such a period some further security for interest might be required beyond the railway receipts. Such security might be given either by the State, as suggested by Mr. Acworth, or in view of the findings of the Financial Commission, we should be perfectly entitled to demand it, or it might be secured by the rates of Ireland.

* * * * *

* Deduced from statistics in the Report of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, 1907.

APPENDIX No. 11

ABSTRACT of proposed Evidence furnished by Mr. John McLaughlin, Portlennane, on behalf of the Ballymena Rural District Council, on the 12th October, 1907.

(Mr. McLaughlin was not examined.)

I am resident in the town of Portlennane since 1861. It is a registered market-place. Fairs and markets were held in the town previous to and since that date, but were gradually growing smaller, and are now entirely extinct. The main cause was and is the want of proper facilities for forwarding produce in large quantities in reasonable time. The district is rich and fertile and grows the ordinary crops—potatoes, oats, flax, hay, and grass seed, etc.—in abundance, but farmers are compelled to market in other towns, chiefly Ballymena, which is well-circumscribed in regard to railways. The town has dwindled and decayed, and is now little better than a cross-roads, ten miles from a market. The residents always realised the great drawback of want of railway accommodation, and made repeated efforts to come into touch with the Northern Counties line since it was made. It is a tradition here that one of the first projected railways in the North of Ireland was from Larne to Portlennane. In 1874 a branch line was surveyed and mapped from Ballymena to Kilrea, through Portlennane. The mapping and surveying were paid by public subscription. A deputation, of which I was a member, waited on the Directors of the Northern Counties Railway Company to ask assistance. On some day a deputation from the projected Derry Central Company waited on the Directors, and after discussion they decided to support that scheme, as a great deal of support from local landlords, including the London Companies, was promised. Our scheme was put on the shelf.

In 1898, the late Mr. James Chaine, M.P., proposed a continuation of the Ballymena and Larne Railway (narrow gauge), then lately made into Ballymena, into Portlennane, so as to tap the South Derry traffic. This was warmly taken up by the public, who subscribed about £12,000 in shares. A Bill was presented in Parliament and was passed by the Lords' Committee, although opposed by the Northern Counties Company. The opposition was confined before the Committee of the House of Commons, with the result that a clause was inserted making the line practically broad gauge, with optional powers to the Northern Counties Company. This clause killed the project, as no more shares could be sold, and great expenses had been incurred. After holding on for five or six years the Portlennane Company was liquidated. The loss in money to the country was about £20,000. Since then no effort has been made, as it would be impossible to raise capital in the district owing to these failures. The now proposed road tramway from Portlennane to Carnalough, through Ballymena, would be about twenty-six miles long, and, except for a distance of about four miles, lies entirely on the Ballymena Rural District, and would be of much advantage, as it would give cheap and easy access to the principal markets, of which four are held in Ballymena each week; would serve the various industries along the route, and it would largely benefit the villages of Broughshane, Grangehill, Aghaghill, and Portlennane, and especially benefit the Portlennane district by providing a means of obtaining lime from Carnalough and the huckins adjacent to Larne. Larne is a very important manure for the lands about

the Bann, and is used as largely as the farmers' means permit. Under present conditions it is inconvenient and costly to provide.

The Northern Counties (now Midland Company) give through rates, Belfast to Portlennane via Cullybrackey station, for goods, but these rates are high and effectually handicap local traders. The town is thirty-three miles from Belfast. Grain, flour, feeding-stuffs, bean, etc., etc., cost 18s 6d per ton. General goods, 16s 6d, 18s 3d, up to 20s per ton. Freight can be saved by booking goods to Ballymena and starting from thence, so that the through rate is not only of no use, but is much higher. For this one reason, trade in feeding-stuffs, coals, timber, and all heavy goods has been diverted to Ballymena and elsewhere. Had we railway accommodation we would still hold an amount of the traffic outwards and inwards, and perhaps arrest the decay of the town.

Inside the distance of eleven miles there are no less than fourteen railway stations, while we are isolated. The nearest, Cullybrackey, is six miles over a difficult road, but Ballymena (ten miles) is the principal one. Had we any up-to-date means of communication, we believe the Lower Bann Valley would be much frequented by tourists and holiday trippers.

I am of opinion that owing to the great expense of making and maintaining an ordinary railway it would be difficult, if not impossible, to raise the capital necessary, and that the volume of trade would not guarantee a dividend, but a tram line laid on the side of the existing main roads would have a fair chance of success. The County Council is willing to give all facilities in its power, and the Rural District Council would help all it could, even to the extent of a guarantee on the rates, as there would occur a great saving in the upkeep of roads. The Northern Counties Company offered help at one time under the "Light Railways Act," and should now give support, as the contemplated tramway would undoubtedly serve as a feeder for their line. The owners of industrial concerns at Carnalough, of the Claymore Iron Mines, the various firms owning works at Broughshane, the Union Council of Ballymena, the Lonsdale Bleaching Co., and residents all along the tramway route would co-operate, and it should not be difficult to raise the money required if a grant could be obtained from the Treasury. Many efforts have been made to induce spinning and weaving, hosiery-making and shirt-making firms to establish branch works at Portlennane, as labour was plentiful and cheap, but without success—want of railway facilities being the principal block in the way. Our working people, left idle by the failure of the hand-loom trade, had to migrate and emigrate to find employment. A new industry is springing up along the River Bann. The peculiar white clay which gives the name to the river and called, I believe, "Glasgowite," is raised and prepared for export by an English firm. The cost of carriage to Belfast or Coleraine is very high. The proposed tramway would enable them to ship at Carnalough in small vessels or steamers, at a greatly reduced cost of freight, and thus help to develop, commercially, the immense deposits of clay and peat in the district.

APPENDIX No. 12.

EXTRACTS from published notices relative to Expansion arrangements handed in by the Manager of the Belfast and County Down Railway during the examination of Dr. GEORGE GIBSON, J.R., representative of the Donaghadee Urban Council District, on the 14th October, 1907.

I.

1905.

Spring Show.

" BELFAST AND COUNTY DOWN RAILWAY.

Jubilee Horse and Cattle

Show

At Balmoral,

On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10th, 11th and

12th May.

RETURN TICKETS AT SINGLE FARES

Will be issued to Belfast at all Stations from Newcastle to Comber, also from Ballynahinch, Ardgliss and Donaghadee Branches, to Members and Exhibitors on production of their Show Tickets, and to Passengers purchasing at the Booking Station a Ticket of Admission to the Show Grounds at Balmoral."

II.

Summer Show.

" HORSE AND SHEEP SHOW AT BALMORAL

on

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 5th, 6th and 7th

July.

RETURN TICKETS AT SINGLE FARES

Will be issued to

BELFAST

At all Stations from Newcastle to Comber, also from Ballynahinch, Ardgliss and Donaghadee Branches, to Members and Exhibitors on production of their Show Tickets, and to Passengers purchasing at the Booking Station a Ticket of Admission to the Show Grounds at Balmoral."

III.

1906.

Spring Show.

" HORSE AND CATTLE SHOW AT BALMORAL

on

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 22nd, 23rd and

24th May, 1906.

RETURN TICKETS AT SINGLE FARES will be issued

To BELFAST

At all Stations from Castledillon to Comber, also from Ballynahinch, Ardgliss and Donaghadee Branches, to Members and Exhibitors on production of their Show Tickets, and to Passengers purchasing at the Booking Station a Ticket of Admission to the Show Grounds at Balmoral."

IV.

Summer Show.

" HORSE AND SHEEP SHOW AT BALMORAL

on

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 25th, 26th and 27th July, 1906.

CHEAP RETURN TICKETS will be issued to BELFAST from Stations by Trains and at Fares as under:—

From.	Trains at			Return Fares.		
	2nd	1st	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd
	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class
Donaghadee.	7 20	8 20	9 0	10 15	2/6	2/9
Grounsport						2/3
Road,	7 30	8 30	—	10 34	3/-	3/6
Newtownards,	7 40	8 30	9 10	10 34	3/8	3/3
Comber.	7 50	—	9 20	10 47	2/4	1/10

The above Fares include One Admission to the Show Yard.

Tickets available for Return on date of issue only. Single Fares, plus 1/- for admission to Show.

CHARLES A. MOORE, Manager."

APPENDIX No. 13.

COPY of a Document handed in by Mr. TAYLOR, on behalf of the Associated Irish Railway Companies during the examination of Dr. GEORGE GIBSON, J.P., representative of the Donaghadee Urban District Council on the 14th October, 1907.

FREE TICKETS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL HOUSES

Companies who issue the above tickets.

Companies who do not issue the above tickets.

Term of years		
Farness Railway (to purchasers of building plots on the Company's Seacastle Estate only),	7	Great North of Scotland Railway.
Cork and Macroom Direct Railway,	5	Great Western Railway.
Great Southern and Western Railway,	5	Cheshire Lines Committee.
Cork, Blackrock and Passage Railway (for a house the poor law valuation of which is between £11 and £20—one year additional allowed for every £10 or fractional part of £10 increase in the valuation above £20),	5	Sligo, Letteran and Northern Counties Railway.
Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway,	7	North British Railway.
Dublin and South Eastern Railway,	7	Highland Railway.
Great Northern Railway (Ireland),	7	Glasgow and South Western Railway.
Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee),	10	Caledonian Railway.
Midland Great Western Railway,	5	South Eastern and Chatham Railway.
Belfast and County Down Railway—Main Line,	10	Metropolitan Railway.
Do., do., do., Banger Branch,	7	Cork, Brandon and South Coast Railway.
		Midland Railway.
		London, Brighton and South Coast Railway.
		London and South Western Railway.
		North Eastern Railway.
		Great Central Railway.
		London and North Western Railway.
		Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.
		Great Northern Railway (E)
		Great Eastern Railway.
		London, Chatham and Dover Railway.

APPENDIX No. 14.

COPY of a LETTER from Mr. ROBERT SLOAN, Donaghadee, Representative of the Donaghadee Urban District Council, relative to matters referred to by him during his examination on the 14th October, 1907.

19, High-street, Donaghadee.
17th February, 1908.

(Enclosure.)

High-street, Donaghadee,
17th February, 1908.

To George E. Skenehan, Esq.,
Secretary, Vice-Royal Commission on
Irish Railways

Dear Sir—

In reference to the freight before the Commission, in Dublin, on the 14th October, 1907, you were quite correct as regards the Falkirk cartage from Glasgow to Donaghadee. When I asked the Belfast and County Down Railway Company for an explanation, they said this is how it is with us.—We had to pay Messrs. Burns' steamer &c., the Belfast Harbour dues &c., collection for 1s. 6d. per ton on our line. That was 10s. 6d. for 1 ton and 5 cwt., and is 3d. for delivery to me at Killybegs-street. That was in 1895, sometime from September until November. I am sorry, although I have looked it up, I cannot find the receipt.

Dear Sir—

Please find enclosed the particulars relative to charges on goods, mentioned during my examination in Dublin, in October, 1907 (Question 23277.)

Yours truly,

(Signed), JAMES MCCUNE,
Builder.

Yours truly,

(Signed), ROBERT SLOAN.

To Robert Sloan, Esq.,
Donaghadee.

APPENDIX No. 15.

COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE handed in by Mr THOMAS McDERMOTT, Foyle and Bann Fisheries, Londonderry, during his examination on the 15th October, 1907.

I.

Foyle and Bann Fisheries, Londonderry.

21st May, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

I have received a telegram from Messrs. Henry Barber and Sons, London, in which they say—"Bann salmon, one box received 0.25, 8s. 3d; one box 10.30, 2s. 2d. This is a loss of a penny a pound on one box, equal to 12s. 6d., and the late delivery of the first box may have occasioned a loss on both boxes. I will have to ask you to pay the 12s. 6d. loss on the later box, and now, at the beginning of our season, I wish to intimate to you that if you are not prepared to deliver our consignments in a reasonable time I will have to divert our traffic. I cannot bear to have another year's worrying over late deliveries, same as I had last year.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS McDERMOTT.

JAMES COWIE, Esq.,

Traffic Manager, Midland Railway
(Northern Counties Committee),
Belfast.

II.

Londonderry,

14th June, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

I enclose copies of two telegrams just received from our agents in London. The boxes unsold will certainly bring twopence a pound less to-morrow, and I will have to make claims for the loss. Please say over what route were these fish carried from steamer.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS McDERMOTT.

JAMES COWIE, Esq.,

Belfast.

COPIES OF TELEGRAMS.

McDermott, Foyle Fishery,

Londonderry.

Your boxes Bann arrived 10.45. One box salmon, 1s. 10d.; one box grise, 1s. 3d. Two boxes unsold, market being over—Barber, Billingsgate.

Foyle Bann Fisheries, Londonderry.

Fish arrived 12.45. Not sold—Stewart, Billingsgate.

III.

Midland Railway Company

(Northern Counties Committee),

Belfast, 16th June, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your letter of 14th inst., with enclosure, and regret the necessity to complain of delay in transit of the consignments of fish to London. I am taking the matter up for inquiry, and shall write you further with particulars in a few days.

Yours truly,

JAMES COWIE, per J. M.,

Traffic Manager.

T. McDermott, Esq.,

Foyle and Bann Fisheries,
Londonderry.

IV.

Midland Railway Company

(Northern Counties Committee),

Belfast, 21st June, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

Referring to your letter of the 14th inst. in regard to delay to salmon while in transit from Coleraine to London on the 13th inst., I beg to inform you that I have taken the matter up with the L.N.W. Company. The salmon was conveyed by the L. & N.W. route.

Yours truly,

JAMES COWIE, per J. M.,

Traffic Manager.

T. McDermott, Esq.,

Londonderry.

V.

Midland Railway Company

(Northern Counties Committee),

Belfast, 21st July, 1906.

Foyle and Bann Fisheries Complaint.

DEAR MR. McDERMOTT,

Referring to your letter of 14th ult. respecting four boxes of salmon dispatched to Messrs. H. Barber and Sons, and four boxes to W. F. Stuart, both consignments having been despatched from Coleraine to London on the 13th ult., I beg to inform you that I have now received reply from the London and North Western Company's Superintendent at Euston, who states that the fish reached there by train due at 8.8 a.m., but some delay occurred in the delivery owing to a van not having been available until 9.20 a.m. Delivery was effected in market at 10.20 a.m. on the 14th June, and the delay is greatly to be regretted, the circumstances of which were duly gone into, and it is hoped that the steps taken will prevent a similar occurrence.

Yours truly,

JAMES COWIE, per J. M.,

Traffic Manager.

T. McDermott, Esq.,

Londonderry.

VI.

Londonderry,

23rd July, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

Your sale of Saturday was so much below what was realised by our other salesmen that it is impossible for us to continue sending you our fish for sale, at least in such large quantities. It is no excuse for you to say that you had to sell at a lower price because of the late delivery by the Railway Company. You should make the Railway Company either deliver the fish in time or pay the loss, and if we have to withhold our shipments or send you loss you have good cause for action against the Railway Company for loss and damage to your trade. I have written so often to the Railway Company here complaining that I cannot think of writing any more. Would a question asked in the House of Commons have any good result?

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS McDERMOTT.

John Lewry, Esq.,

Manchester.

VII.

Londonderry,
6th August, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Overleaf I give copies of three telegrams received here on Saturday, and I make no comments.

Yours faithfully,
THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

James Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

COPIES OF TELEGRAMS.

M'Dermott, Foyle Fisheries.

Four boxes arrived 11.55; too late for customers; if any loss will advise you amount to claim.—Barber, Billingsgate.

Fisheries, Derry.

Two received 1 o'clock; regret impossible make sale.—Grant May, Billingsgate.

Foyle Bann Fisheries, Derry.

Your fish arrived 1 o'clock; not sold; will do best Monday, and let you know if any loss.—Stearns, Billingsgate.

VIII.

Midland Railway
(Northern Counties Committee),
Belfast

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your letter of 6th inst., and extremely regret the necessity to complain of late delivery of fish at London on 4th inst. I am taking the matter up strongly with the L. & N.W. Company, and after the matter is fully enquired into I shall communicate with you further.

Yours truly,

JAS. COWIE, per J. O.,
Traffic Manager.

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,
Londonderry.

IX.

Londonderry,
8th August, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

Overleaf I give copies of two letters received to-day. The fish, Mr. Barber says, would have brought 1s. 6d. per lb. had they been delivered in time on Saturday, have since been sold, 300 lbs., at 1s. 2d., and 300 at 1s. 2d., which is a loss of 29 7s. 6d. The carriers cannot realize the enormous losses we sustain through their delays in delivering our fish.

The meaning of Mr. Lowry's letter is that when we transfer our engagements to another market on the grounds that he cannot obtain adequate prices owing to late deliveries he will have to take action against the carriers for loss to his trade, and this is what I shall recommend him to do, and thus give the carriers an opportunity of showing that they are not to blame in the matter.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

James Cowie, Esq.,
Belfast.

(COPIES OF LETTERS REFERRED TO ABOVE.)

London, 7th August, 1906.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the four boxes received too late for sale on Saturday, we consider that if these had arrived in good time for market they would have realised 1s. 6d. per lb. We, therefore, advise you to claim for the difference in the price owing to the delay.

Yours faithfully,

HENRY BARNES & SON.

T. M'Dermott, Esq., Londonderry.

Manchester, 7th August, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry you have to complain of our prices, but I assure you I am doing my very best. I really don't get a chance of our early market, not a single morning, although I have a man and horse waiting the arrival of the train every morning. I will go on Wednesday and see the Superintendent, and give him to understand it is likely some action is going to take place for the recovery of those losses you have sustained, and also show him the loss it is going to be to me as well as the company on account of the fish having to be sent to other markets in consequence of their late deliveries. Shall let you know how I get on.

Yours truly,

J. LOWRY.

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,
Londonderry.

COPIES OF TELEGRAMS RECEIVED BY FOYLE AND BANN FISHERIES COMPANY IN 1906

Date.	Hour of Dispatch.	Source.	Message.
June 30	11 34 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Two boxes received 10 o'clock."
" 29	11 58 a.m.	Do.	"Four more boxes arrived 12 30."
" 28	3 2 p.m.	Stearns, London.	"Large fish arrived 12 o'clock."
" 26	11 4 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Arrived 12 o'clock."
July 4	11 40 a.m.	Stearns, London.	"Arrived very late."
" 4	12 3 p.m.	Barber, London.	"Arrived 11 o'clock. We are stronger in half-way. Go on late delivery."
" 22	8 59 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Foyle or Bann carriers, late and not arrived."
" 22	1 5 p.m.	Stearns, London.	"Arrived 12 o'clock."
" 22	12 0 a.m.	Grant May, London.	"Not arrived 1 o'clock to delivery."
" 22	12 42 a.m.	Do.	"Five arrived this minute, 11.30. Now delivered. This is bad service. My own imagination. Ready down. We'll find out do better."
" 14	9 2 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Not yet arrived."
" 10	8 55 a.m.	Grant May, London.	"Deliveries late. THE TWO MEN."
" 20	10 10 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Foyle not yet arrived."
" 21	9 55 a.m.	Do.	"Large fish not yet arrived."
" 21	10 14 a.m.	Do.	"Ten boxes Foyle make received 12 30."
" 21	7 40 a.m.	Lowry, Manchester.	"Now nearly half o'clock and fish not yet arrived. The fish are gone home down, so it has now started the early market."
" 21	8 40 a.m.	Do.	"A fish which had arrived, eight boxes and twelve pounds half-pound weight, all boxes at a melting point. Great disappointment. Now the fish has lost a pound to three halves a pound all round with arrivals to late."
Aug. 2	11 3 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Late delivery given received 12 45."
" 4	12 21 a.m.	Do.	"Now 11.30. post fish not yet arrived."
" 4	11 55 a.m.	Stearns, London.	"Nothing received from you yet now 11.30."
" 4	1 22 p.m.	Grant May, London.	"Four boxes not yet arrived. Arrived too late to deposit at."
" 7	11 58 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Four boxes received 12 40, weekly."
" 7	10 3 a.m.	Stearns, London.	"Fishes arrive, 11 a day's arrival and now yet."
" 7	12 5 p.m.	Do.	"Wednesday's fish arrived 12 40, weekly."
" 8	9 53 a.m.	Barber, London.	"Four boxes Foyle arrive received yesterday late, 1/1."
" 10	9 34 a.m.	Do.	"Large fish not arrived."

X.

Londonderry,

26th June, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

I enclose copy of telegram just received from London, by which you will see that owing to the late delivery of the Bann fish sent by your line yesterday we lost 4d per lb on the grilse. Of the 20 boxes sent 14 were grilse, and 4d per lb is 6s 3d a box, so that the loss amounted to the sum of \$4 7s. 6d. I must ask you to compensate my company for this loss.

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

Handed in at Billingsgate 11.10 a.m. Received here 11.50 a.m.

M'Dermott, Doyle Fishery, Londonderry.

Ballyshannon early arrival salmon, 1s. 4jd;
Grilse, 1s. 3d.; Bann late arrival salmon, 1s. 4jd;
grilse, 1s. 2jd.—Stuart.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

XI.

Londonderry,

1st July, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

Referring to the 14 boxes of salmon short shipped by the U.S.S. Company at Belfast on Thursday, the 28th ult., and which were to be sent by the Larne and Stranraer daylight service on Friday morning, and timed to arrive in Liverpool on the same evening, we have been informed by our agents in Liverpool that the fish were not delivered there till Saturday morning, the 29th, and had to be sold for a penny a pound less than if they had been delivered at the proper time. A penny a pound is 12s. 6d. a box, so that the loss amounts to 22 lbs. This is a loss which I will have to ask your company to make good. Copies of telegram and letter received from consignees as follow:—

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

Liverpool, June 29, 1907.

9.6 a.m. Fisheries, Londonderry.

14 boxes, fourteen pence; 22 boxes, fifteen pence.
(The 22 boxes were sent from here on Friday)

COPY OF LETTER.

Liverpool,

29th June, 1907.

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,

Londonderry.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter, 28th, duly received. As wired you, we received all the fish this morning. We kept our men waiting until 8.30 last evening, but the 14 boxes did not turn up. We doubt very much if the fish were received as you directed. Some of the boxes had a sprinkling, and others quite bare. We had to sell at 1s. 2d., as the fish were softish, and buyers would not give top figure, 1s. 3d.

Yours faithfully,

D. G. STUART & Co

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

XII

Londonderry,

12th July, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

Below I give you copies of telegrams received from Manchester and London. Both have reference to fish sent from here via Larne yesterday, and I am sure you will admit that it is too bad we should have to suffer such losses through the default of the carrying companies. Thirteen boxes were sent to Manchester and seven to Grant and May.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

COPIES OF TELEGRAMS.

12th July, 1907.

"7.45 when fish arrived; grilse sold threepence pound; trout not yet sold. I consider this loss a penny a pound not being here for early market."—Lowry, Manchester, 9.10 a.m.

12th July, 1907.

"Not yet arrived; have sold 1s. 2jd. if not too late to deliver."—Grant, May, Billingsgate, 10.50 a.m.

XIII.

Londonderry,

12th July, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

Since writing you earlier I have received the following telegram from London:—

Billingsgate, 12.55, July 12, 1907.—Bann salmon not yet arrived; now 12.45.

This is a more serious matter than you can conceive, for on the telegrams we receive we divide our shipments each day, and how can we do this when our messages are not delivered until our shipments are sent off?

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

Billingsgate, 3.56.—Arrived 2.30; too late; only three boxes sold.—Grant, May.

XIV.

Londonderry,

12th July, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

Can nothing be done to deliver our fish in time? Stuart, of Billingsgate, telegraphs:—"Bann salmon arrived 12.45; will do best Monday." This on a Saturday. There is sure to be a loss of a penny or twopence a pound on thirteen boxes, which was the number sent from Colonsme yesterday. These losses the carriers must bear.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

XV.

5, Billingsgate,
London, E.C., 13/7/07.

Thos. M'Dermott, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

It was annoying, and will, we fear, be expensive, that we had to wire you no sales made of six boxes salmon and one trout, which were delivered at 12.45. We are informed the delay is caused at your side, and we do not see what can at present be done to alter. The delivery yesterday was of course much later. To-day we had sold at 1s. 2jd. to deliver by 11.30 to city buyers, but being a half-holiday and banks closing at one, the city is almost empty by 2 to 2.30 on a Saturday. We will see, and will do our best with them on Monday, and return

Yours truly,

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,

Londonderry.

GRANT & MAY.

XVI.

5, Billingsgate,

London, E.C., 24/7/07.

DEAR SIR,

Your esteemed favour to hand, with thanks, and contents duly noted. We will look after your interests to the best of our ability. Again to-day we have a delivery four hours late—viz., 12.15, and it is more than probable we shall be obliged to sell for a lower price than we could have made to-day, say up to 10.30 o'clock. Should this be the case we will inform you.

Yours obediently,

GRANT & MAY.

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,

Londonderry.

XVII.

XXII.

DEAR SIR,

27th July, 1907.

I enclose copy of a letter I have just written to Mr. Cowie, Manager of Midland Railway, Belfast. This treatment cannot be borne with any longer, so unless you can get the carrying companies to deliver our fish in reasonable time we must cease sending to your market. Nearly every consignment this season has been late—some of them many hours late. I should be sorry to have to sever our connection with you, but there is nothing else I can do under the circumstances.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

XVIII.

Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee),
Belfast.

DEAR SIR,

18th July, 1907.

I duly received your letters of 12th and 13th inst. Extremely regret the necessity for your complaint in respect of late deliveries of salmon traffic, and have taken the matter up specially with our cross-Channel friends with a view to an improvement being effected, and shall communicate with you further, soon as I am in a position to do so.

Yours truly,

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,
Londonderry.

JAS. COWIE.

XIX.

Londonderry,

DEAR SIR,

18th July, 1907.

Sorry to have to complain again of late delivery of fish to London. "W. F. Stewart telegraph—"Barr salmon arrived 12 o'clock; too late for sale to-day." Grant and May telegraph with reference to Foyle fish—"Arrived noon; regret none sold." The Ballyshannon salmon sent yesterday via Greenore were delivered in good time, and realised good prices.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

XX.

Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee),
Belfast.

DEAR SIR,

26th July, 1907.

Your favour of the 18th inst. to hand in regard to the transit of salmon to London. I regret very much that there should have been cause for complaint, and I have taken the subject up with the object of ascertaining where the trouble arose.

Yours truly,

JAMES COWIE, per J. M.,
Traffic Manager.T. M'Dermott, Esq.,
Londonderry.

XXI.

Londonderry,

DEAR SIR,

24th July, 1907.

I am sorry to again have to complain of delay in delivering our fish. Lowry, Manchester, wired at 9.30—"7.40 when fish arrived; these late arrivals are ruining the trade." Grant and May, London, wired at 1.16—"Received 12.15, regret unable to make sale." Stewart, London, wired—"Barr salmon arrived 12.15, will do best to-morrow." On these late we are sure to have a big loss to-morrow, and must claim for whatever we may lose. There surely cannot be any good reason given for these delays.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee),
Belfast,
26th July, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of yours of the 24th inst., and am very sorry indeed to hear that these late deliveries continue. I have the matter in hand at present with the various companies who are concerned with the Larne and Stranraer route, and am taking every possible means to endeavour to get prompt deliveries made.

Yours truly,

JAS. COWIE, per G. R. W.,

Traffic Manager.

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,
Londonderry.

XXIII.

Londonderry,

DEAR SIR,

27th July, 1907.

Have just received the following telegram from London—"Arrived 11.40; regret impossible to sell."—Grant, May. This means we must either stop sending fish to London or take some other route. Of late owing to these delays we have been sending less to London, and I see nothing for it but to cease sending altogether. London salesmen will have something to say over this.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

James Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

XXIV.

Midland Railway (Northern Counties Committee),
Belfast,
30th July, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

I have forwarded copies of your letter of 27th inst. to the various interested companies in order to let it be seen how the late arrivals affect you, and the inquiries regarding the previous complaints are still going on, and I trust it will have some effect in mitigating these delays.

Yours truly,

JAMES COWIE, per J. M.,
Traffic Manager.T. M'Dermott, Esq.,
Londonderry.

COPY OF TELEGRAM

August 3/07.

T. M'Dermott to (Gen.) J. Cowie.
Gen. Belfast.

See that our shipments to-day are in time for to-morrow's market; if not will be all lost before 3 p.m. day; no market on Monday.

M'Dermott Fisheries.

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

(Gen.) J. Cowie to T. M'Dermott.
York road, Belfast, 6.30. (6.42.)
M'Dermott Fisheries, Londonderry.
"Your wire has special attention."—Gen.

XXV.

Londonderry.

7th August, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

My remembrance hitherto and my telegram of Friday last have not resulted in any improvement in the deliveries of the fish. On August 1, at 10.15 a.m., Sluaria, London, wired—"Today's fish not here yet." At 11.17 Grant and May wired—"Arrived 10.45; three sold." This left two boxes unsold, which had to be disposed of at less money next day. On August 2nd Lowry, Manchester, wired—"£30 when your fish arrived; sold 1s. 2d. pound; consider this fish has lost nearly a pound through late arrival." On same date Grant and May, London, wired—"Received 12.30; sorry, but too late for sale." On August 3rd, at 1.6, Sluaria, London, wired—"Box fish just arrived." Same date Grant and May wired—"Two received 12.30; afraid to hold till, probably, Tuesday; have sold 1s. 1d., 1s. 2d." This was a loss of at least 1½d a pound, and it was with reference to those that I wired you on the 3rd. August 7th Gordon Stuart, Liverpool, wired at 9.15—"Your fish not received." and Lowry, Manchester, wired—"8.45 when fish arrived; market over; I am offering the fish at fourpence a pound; none yet sold; shall wire again later." This is fully a penny a pound loss on five boxes.

Now, at the end of our season I shall furnish you with a claim for what loss we may sustain through late deliveries.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS M'DERMOTT.

Jas. Cowie, Esq., Belfast.

P.S.—At 12.5 just now Stuart, Liverpool, wires—"Fish just received." There can surely be no excuse for these extraordinary delays. Sluaria, London, telegraphed 12.10—"Fish not yet arrived."

XXVI.

Midland Railway Company

(Northern Counties Committee).

Belfast, 9th August, 1907.

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of yours of 7th inst., and extremely regret that you find it necessary to again complain of delay in delivery of fish traffic. I have had the matter up very strongly with the cross-Channel companies, and impressed on them the necessity of giving the traffic best possible attention that circumstances will permit. My enquiries are not yet complete, but I presume the later arrivals are due to heavy traffic in England, which is usually experienced at this season of the year. You may rely on our doing everything possible to expedite the transit. As I explained in telegram today in reply to yours, we could not of course guarantee deliveries of fish traffic in England at a particular time.

Yours truly,

JAMES COWIE, per J. D.

Traffic Manager.

T. M'Dermott, Esq.,

Londonderry.

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

9 Aug. 1907.

T. M'Dermott to (Gen.) J. Cowie.

10.30 Gen., Belfast.

Can you deliver 6 boxes London, 6 Manchester, and 16 Liverpool in time for market to-morrow.

M'DERMOTT FISHERIES

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

(Gen.) J. Cowie to T. M'Dermott.

York road, Belfast, 1.25. (1.40.)

M'Dermott, Fisheries, Derry.

Your wire; impossible to guarantee deliveries at particular time; have already made strong representations to the several companies; they seem to be doing their best to cope with large traffic.—Gen.

Centre of TELEGRAMS received by FYLE & BONE
FISHERIES COMPANY in year 1907.

Date.	Hour of Dispatch.	Sender.	Message.
April 17	1 2 p.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Box from Colchester arrived 10.45. Will do best Monday."
May 4	10 22 a.m.	Do.	"Box from Colchester arrived late."
" 9	10 32 a.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived 10 o'clock."
" 10	10 35 a.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived 9.30."
" 30	10 52 a.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived late."
June 1.	11 25 a.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived late."
" 5	10 30 a.m.	Lowry, Manchester.	"Nine o'clock when your salmon from York arrived; but your salmon not yet arrived."
" 23	9 50 a.m.	Do.	"Your salmon from York arrived 1.15. Late arrival. Salmon from York arrived 1.15. Your salmon not yet arrived."
" 29	15 15 p.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Box salmon arrived 1.15. Late arrival. Salmon from York arrived 1.15. Your salmon not yet arrived."
July 5	10 22 a.m.	Grant May, London.	"Your fish not yet arrived."
" 10	9 43 a.m.	Lowry, Manchester.	"After seven o'clock when fish arrived."
" 12	9 25 a.m.	Do.	"I have delayed until the boat. It is impossible now. No boat is in time with the fish arriving at late."
" 12	12 35 p.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Your fish not yet received. 12.45."
" 13	9 38 a.m.	Lowry, Manchester.	"Seven o'clock when fish arrived. Your fish not yet sold."
" 13	10 44 a.m.	Do.	"No use for leave this day at all. Your fish will arrive with the boat here."
" 13	2 25 p.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Box salmon arrived 12.45. Will do best Monday."
" 19	1 7 p.m.	Grant May, London.	"Arrived 12.30, not yet sold."
" 19	2 2 p.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Box fish arrived 12.30. Will do best to-morrow."
" 20	9 30 a.m.	Lowry, Manchester.	"Nineteen o'clock and fish not yet arrived."
" 20	12 20 a.m.	Do.	"Ten o'clock when fish arrived. Box fish has lost at least fourpence a pound with not being here for early market."
" 23	1 27 p.m.	Grant May, London.	"Report to inform you your consignment not yet arrived."
" 23	2 45 p.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Your salmon arrived 2.15. Will do best Monday, have pity."
" 24	10 34 a.m.	Do.	"Box fish not yet arrived."
" 27	1 6 p.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived 11.45 not sold."
" 28	4 40 a.m.	Grant May, London.	"Yesterday 1.15 one delivered. 1.15 better received. Sluaria, London, can meet in case not, but railway alone to Sluaria."
" 28	10 14 a.m.	Do.	"Three arrived 8.45."
" 31	12 15 p.m.	Do.	"Just received 12.15. Expected to arrive late."
Aug. 2	9 45 a.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Yesterday's late arrival. Box salmon, 1.15, arrive, 1.15."
" 7	10 2 a.m.	Do.	"To day's fish not here yet."
" 7	12 15 p.m.	Grant May, London.	"Your fish not received."
" 8	9 13 a.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Yesterday's late arrival. Box salmon, 1.15, arrive, 1.15. Your fish not sold."
" 8	1 10 p.m.	Grant May, London.	"Arrived 12.16."
" 9	12 15 a.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived 1.15. Your fish not yet received."
" 9	11 5 a.m.	Sluaria, London.	"Box salmon arrived 1.15. Your fish not yet received."
" 21	11 56 a.m.	Do.	"Box salmon arrived 1.15. Your fish not yet received."

APPENDIX No. 16.

STATEMENTS transmitted by the Secretary, South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association, Cork, as supplementary to the evidence given by Mr. M. J. NAGLE, on behalf of the Association, on the 16th October, 1907.

I.

SOUTH OF IRELAND CATTLE TRADE ASSOCIATION.

Office—25 King street, Cork,
26th October, 1907.

SIR,—The following are the facts of Mr. M. J. Nagle's case which he promised to send to the Commission when under examination on Wednesday, October 16th inst.

1. On the occasion of Lismore Fair, 13th July, 1904, he loaded and booked seventy-two lambs in Lismore Station at 11 a.m., in two wagons. They did not arrive at Killybegs (Cork) until 6 a.m. on the 14th, and were then in a pitiable condition, having been over eighteen hours in the wagons without food or water. Mr. Nagle claimed 2s each compensation, but the G.S. and W. Railway Company refused to entertain the claim.

I am to add that had the lambs been sent via Waterford they would have arrived at New Milford at the time they actually did arrive in Cork. It is obvious that whilst this preferential treatment is given to other ports, Cork cattle dealers are very much handicapped, and are deterred from attending fairs, where otherwise they would be the means of creating a healthy competition.

Tipperary Fair.

2 With reference to the answer to question No. 25694, as to which Mr. Nagle was asked to give details, the following are the facts:—On Wednesday, 10th October, 1906, there were eleven wagons loaded and booked to Cork, but which were not being despatched. Mr. John O'Callaghan, Hon. Secretary of this Association, seeing this, went to the station-master, and asked him to send them away as a special train. The latter refused, saying he had no authority to send a "special" with eleven wagons. Mr. O'Callaghan then said he represented the Cattle Trade Association, and that they insisted on having a "special" with eleven wagons. The station-master thereupon said he would write to Mr. Neale, the Traffic Manager, for permission.

Mr. O'Callaghan had to leave Tipperary by passenger train before the reply came from Dublin. At the Limerick Junction station he met the railway inspector for that section, and told him about the matter, but he said he could do nothing. A favourable reply must have been sent by Mr. Neale, for a special train was subsequently sent, not, however, until after considerable delay.

I may add that on that very same occasion Mr. Jeremiah Quinslan, of Cork, one of our members, had three wagons of cattle which he could have consigned to Cork, but that he was afraid the railway company would disappoint about the "special," and his stock would lose the best at Cork. He accordingly shipped the stock at Waterford.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) J. P. O'CALLAGHAN,
Secretary

The Secretary,

Veterinary Commission, Dublin.

II.

SOUTH OF IRELAND CATTLE TRADE ASSOCIATION.

Office—25 King street, Cork,
26th October, 1907.

SIR,—Re Mr. M. J. Nagle's evidence before the Commission—question 25648—Mr. Nagle was requested to send you the letter from the railway company referring to this case—the claim of Mr. Leo O'Keefe, of Newmarket.

I have now pleasure in enclosing all the correspondence re this case, viz.—Three letters from the railway company, one from my Association, and a veterinary surgeon's certificate as to cause of death.

Yours truly,

(Signed) J. P. O'CALLAGHAN,

Secretary.

The Secretary,
Railway Commission, Dublin.

(Enclosure).

COPY OF VETERINARY SURGEON'S CERTIFICATE.

Veterinary Infirmary and Hospital for Horses and Dogs.

18, COOK-STREET, CORK,
11th March, 1906.

At the request of Mr. O'Keefe I have, this day, held a post-mortem examination on a cow at Killybegs.

I found extensive bruising of the tissues of the lower part of the neck, chiefly on the right hand side.

The jugular vein was ruptured at its root, also the large veins leading from the heart.

Death was due to internal hemorrhage, and the rupture was due to external violence, which must have been of a very severe nature, as evidenced by the extensive bruising of the skin and tissues.

(Signed) E. WALLER BOARE, F.R.C.V.S.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY,

Traffic Manager's Office, Dublin.

30th April, 1906.

C.M. 53,328.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your claim of £10 10s. for a cow alleged killed in transit, I beg to say that I have had the matter very carefully inquired into and find that the wagon in which the five cows were loaded received very little shunting at Newmarket Station, that the five cows were standing in the wagon when the train left that place, but on arrival at Kanturk, ten minutes later, one of the cows was found down in truck, and on examination by our people there, was found to be dead.

I can only conclude from this that the animal got some fright when passing under bridges, and plunged and fell in the wagon, and got trampled upon by the

other cows, and as this is a matter over which the Company have no control, I regret I must decline to entertain your claim.

Yours truly,

(Signed) R. A. NEALE,
(per J N F.)

Mr. Laurence O'Keefe,
Scarston-street,
Newmarket.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

Traffic Manager's Office, Dublin.

21st May, 1906.

G M. 53,390.

GENTLEMEN—In reply to your letter of the 5th instant, written on behalf of Mr. L. O'Keefe, I beg to say that before I wrote to him my reply of 30th ultimo I had this matter very closely investigated, and had, of course, in mind the suggestion you now make as to the cause of the animal's death; but the guard, who was very specially interrogated, declared he was prepared to swear there was no violence whatever to cause the animal's death during the run from Newmarket to Kanturk. The fact that the train carried only two laden vehicles (one of them being this wagon of cattle), besides eight empty wagons, shows there could have been no violent collisions or impacts to cause the death of the animal claimed for. Indeed the animal's injuries do not point to anything of the kind. If the cow were violently hurled, as you suggest, there would be broken horns, or legs, or a broken neck, but the ruptured arteries do not bear out your suggestion.

I am satisfied, from the inquiries made, that there is nothing to support the charge of bad treatment by the Company, and while I regret Mr. O'Keefe's loss, the claim is one I cannot entertain.

Yours truly,

(Signed) E. A. NEALE,

The Secretaries,

South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association,
Cork.

SOUTH OF IRELAND CATTLE TRADE ASSOCIATION.

Office—25, King-street, Cork.

19th May, 1906.

Laurence O'Keefe's claim

DEAR SIR—In reply to yours of the 8th instant, we are instructed by our Committee to say that they had yours of the 30th ult. to Mr. O'Keefe, as well as that just mentioned to themselves, before them today.

In your letter to Mr. O'Keefe, declining his claim, you say that the animal "got some fright when passing under bridges and plunged and fell."

Our Committee instruct us to point out that if your Company had their cattle trucks covered, as according to the Department's Regulations they should have, this could not have happened. Further, were this the case, all live-stock brought in uncovered wagons are liable to similar accidents—a very serious matter for our members.

Under the circumstances we are to press our member's claim, and hope you will have no difficulty in agreeing with us that it is a perfectly just one, and entitled to the compensation named.

We are, sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed),

M. J. NASH.

JOHN O'CALLAGHAN,
Hon. Secy.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

Traffic Manager's Office, Dublin.

21st May, 1906.

G M. 53,390

DEAR SIR—In reply to your letter of the 19th instant on the subject of Mr. O'Keefe's claim, I beg to say that you are under a misapprehension as to the Departmental order with respect to cattle trucks. The order is not that all our trucks should be roofed, but that all new trucks built after a certain date were to be roofed, and this order we have strictly complied with.

I need scarcely point out to your Committee that many hundreds of thousands of cattle have been safely carried in trucks not roofed, and also that what I stated in my letter of the 30th April to Mr. O'Keefe, as to the probable cause of the mishap to his beast, was purely a suggestion. I have no proof whatever that the beast was killed in the manner suggested, but the suggestion in itself appears a reasonable one. In any case there is no proof whatever that the animal met its death through any neglect or default on the part of the Company, or that it was in any way within our power to have prevented the mishap, and while sympathising with Mr. O'Keefe in his loss, I really cannot see grounds for the Company being pressed to compensate him.

Yours truly,

(Signed) R. A. NEALE

(per E. W.)

The Secretaries,

South of Ireland Cattle Trade Association,
25 King-street,
Cork.

APPENDIX No. 17.

COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE between LORD FREDERIC HAMILTON and the Commission, and between the Commission and the principal Irish Railway Companies, on the subject of Through Train Services, and other matters in connection with Irish railways.

I.

LETTER FROM LORD FREDERIC HAMILTON.

BRASSER'S COURT,
CO. TYRONE
October 16, 1907.

To the Secretary,
Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways.

SIR,—As a former Irish member of Parliament, and as one who takes an interest in the development of Ireland as a tourist resort, I venture to lay certain facts before the members of this Viceregal Commission.

I do not propose to offer to give evidence before the Commission, as there is no evidence I could give which is not already contained in the pages of "Irishman."

I propose to confine myself entirely to the passenger service on Irish railways.

It is evident that in a comparatively poor and sparsely populated country like Ireland the passenger train service must be infrequent as compared with that in a populous country like England.

It would, therefore, appear that the timing of the trains on any one system should be carefully considered with reference to affording through communications with the systems of other companies, especially as the factor of competing routes to any given place is practically non-existent in Ireland (with the exception of the competing routes between Dublin and Waterford and Belfast and Londonderry).

As everyone who travels much in Ireland knows, the timing of the trains of the various companies is framed so perversely that it would appear almost intentionally designed to prevent a traveller from any southern town to a northern town, or vice versa, reaching his destination without being compelled to sleep in Dublin on the way. As an example of this perverse timing, the G.S. and W. fast train to Cork at 12.15 p.m. reaches Kingsbridge, Dublin, at 5.45 p.m. The G.N. express to Belfast leaves Anson's street (Dublin) at 5.50 p.m., rendering connection impossible. Thus later is a most important train, as it connects with the night steamer from Belfast to Glasgow, and is largely used by commercial travellers.

The G.N. fast train leaving Londonderry at 12.15 p.m. and Belfast at 2.30 p.m. reaches Anson's street Station at 5.35 p.m. The D. and S.R. train for Wicklow, Arklow, and Waterford leaves Anson's street at 5.38 p.m., or one minute before the arrival of the Northern train.

The G.N. fast train leaving Anson's street at 3.0 p.m. reaches Great Victoria street Belfast, at 6.4 p.m. The Midland (N.O.C.) train for Larne, Stranraer, Glasgow, and Scotland generally leaves York road, Belfast, 14 miles away from the G.N. terminus, at 5.30 p.m., thus rendering the connection very doubtful.

In England, with its frequent train service, such instances as those given above might produce but little inconvenience in Ireland, with its necessarily limited train service, they usually mean the loss of a day.

The attention of the Commission has already been directed to the fact that the G.N. 7.30 a.m. express from Belfast reaches Anson's street at 10.30 a.m., while during the summer months the G.S. and W. Killybegs express leaves Kingsbridge at 11 a.m. (the distance between the stations is two miles), and although there is a physical connection between Anson's street and Kingsbridge, no through carriages or trains whatever are run from the G.N. system to the G.S. and W., or vice versa.

I am aware that this would entail fitting the rolling stock with the G.S. and W. special brake. The expense of this is, however, not prohibitive.

It is, I believe, a well-established railway axiom that, within reasonable limits, facilities beget traffic. I imagine that the converse holds equally good, and that the lack of facilities in Ireland kills traffic.

During the summer months there is a considerable tourist traffic from Glasgow and its environs to the Killybegs district, via Ardrosson or Greenock and Belfast. No facilities in the way of through carriages between Belfast and Killybegs are afforded them, and as I have shown, the connections between Scotland, Belfast, and Killybegs are very problematical on the outward journey, and impossible on the return one.

It cannot then be wondered if tourists will not pay a second visit to a country where communications are rendered so gratuitously inconvenient for them.

From the tourist district of Achill and Malinbeg, connections, except via Dublin, are practically impossible. I had occasion recently to travel from Castlebar to Londonderry. The line via Claremorris, Coleraine, and Keshilken is fairly direct; the distance 102 miles. Owing to bad connections, the train takes 12½ hours, from 8.35 a.m. to 3.55 p.m., to cover these 102 miles. By travelling via Dublin, distance 299 miles, a saving of fifty-five minutes is actually effected between Castlebar and Londonderry. In other words, a circuitous journey of 299 miles occupies fifty-five minutes less time than the direct journey of 102 miles.

These instances could probably be multiplied indefinitely. I have merely given those of which I have had personal experience.

It is useless to spend money on building hotels and on advertising the attractions of Ireland until the railway companies afford better cross-country facilities.

All that is required is for the general managers of the principal Irish companies to meet in the first instance, and by the exercise of a little intelligence, of a little common sense, and of a little good-will, to arrange the timings of their respective services, so as to afford reasonable intercommunication between the different parts of Ireland.

I would suggest that one through train a day should be run via Dublin between Belfast and Cork in each direction.

The general managers should also discard their minds of the idea that Dublin is the only objective point of travellers in Ireland, and that each railway is a complete entity in itself, instead of a component part in a whole, designed primarily to facilitate rather than to impede communication between the different parts of this kingdom.

Should the general managers fail to arrive at an agreement, the Board of Trade might intervene, and advise to the travelling public in Ireland those facilities which it has a right to demand.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed), FREDERIC HAMILTON.
3 F

II.

CIRCULAR LETTER addressed to the GENERAL MANAGERS of the GREAT NORTHERN (Ireland), the GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN, and the DUBLIN AND SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAYS, and to the MANAGERS of the MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN and the MIDLAND (NORTHERN COUNTIES COMMITTEE) RAILWAYS.

VICEROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS,
15 ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, N., DUBLIN.

2194-07 22nd October, 1907

SIR,—I am directed by the Viceregal Commission to enclose, for the information of your company, an extract* from a letter received from Lord Frederic Hamilton on the subject of train service and other matters in connection with Irish railways.

The Commission will be glad to be favoured with any observations on the several points referred to in the enclosure that your company may desire to offer.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed), GEO. E. SHANAHAN,
Secretary.

III.

LETTER FROM THE TRAFFIC MANAGER OF
THE MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY
(NORTHERN COUNTIES COMMITTEE)

MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY
(Northern Counties Committee),

GM. Belfast.

22nd October, 1907

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 22nd October, marked 2194/07, which was enclosed an extract from a letter addressed to the Viceregal Commission from Lord Frederic Hamilton, the only matter mentioned in the extract which affects this company is the connection between the Great Northern Company's train due in Belfast at 5.4 p.m. and this company's train due to leave Belfast at 5.30 p.m. in connection with the Larne and Stranraer service to England and Scotland. Prior to July, 1906, our boat train left Belfast at 5.30 p.m., so that the present service provides a connection from the Great Northern Company's system, which did not exist until two years ago, so that to this extent the public convenience is benefited. The cross-Channel service via Larne and Stranraer is worked under agreement with the Postmaster-General, and the time of the departure from Belfast is governed by the necessity of making connection with all the principal railway companies' trains in England and Scotland. In arranging a service of this kind it is regarded as of the utmost importance to gather in all possible connections on both sides of the Channel, and every effort is made to accomplish this.

Yours truly,

(Signed), JAS. COWIE

Geo. E. Shanahan, Esq.,

Secretary,

Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways,
15 St. Stephen's Green, N., Dublin.

IV.

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER OF
THE DUBLIN AND SOUTH-EASTERN
RAILWAY.

DUBLIN AND SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.

General Manager's Office,

Westland Row Station, Dublin.

R 6997.

6th November, 1907.

DEAR SIR,—With further reference to your letter (2194-07) of 22nd ultimo, enclosing extract from a letter received from Lord Frederic Hamilton, I beg to make the following observations:

Only one of the instances mentioned in Lord Frederic's letter applies to this company—namely, the want of a connection at Annes street between the Great Northern train due at 5.35 p.m. and this company's train leaving Annes street at 5.34 p.m.

In order to make a connection between these two trains it is obvious that either the Great Northern train must arrive earlier, or the South-Eastern train must be timed to leave later than at present. I am informed that the Great Northern train has connections from all parts of the North and West of Ireland, that it is a very heavy train, and has worked at the present time for many years. It has been found that the present timing is suitable throughout, and the Great Northern Company are of opinion that it would be undesirable to make any change in its running.

If the connection is to be made by altering the time of departure of this company's train from Annes street, it would be necessary to delay the starting of that train until 5.45 p.m. at earliest. This would allow a margin of eight minutes only to enable passengers to get from the arrival side of Annes street Station to the Loop Lane Station, and would be a small enough margin in the case of passengers with luggage.

But the 5.34 p.m. from Annes street forms the 5.45 p.m. from Westland Row to Bray, and is one of the series of trains which leave Westland Row for Bray at 45 minutes past the hour, from 7.45 a.m. to 11.45 p.m.; if it started from Annes street nine minutes later than at present it could not leave Westland Row until, at the earliest, 5.51.

The 5.45 p.m. is the fastest down train of the whole day, and such an alteration would be greatly resented by the business people who use it. It is also very undesirable to break the sequence of trains leaving at the same hour during the whole day.

A more serious difficulty would arise from the alteration. At present the train reaches Bray at 5.20 p.m., and connects there with the 6.5 p.m. main line train from Harcourt street to Wexford, etc., which is due to arrive at Bray at 6.27 and to leave at 6.30. It is found that the margin of ten minutes at Bray between the arrival of the 5.34 p.m. and the departure of the 6.5 p.m. is fully needed. It often happens that cross-Channel passengers, with quantities of luggage, travel by this train from Kington to stations south of Bray, and the exchange could not be made in the four minutes, which would be the most that would be available if the alteration of the 5.34 p.m. from Annes street was carried out.

Unfortunately the 6.5 p.m. down train cannot be given more time at Bray, because it has a tight crossing at Greystones with the 4.30 p.m. up mail, a scheduled train. We could not keep back the 6.5 p.m. train at Bray to cross the 4.30 p.m. up at that station, because the single platform we have at Bray is not long enough to accommodate both trains, and if the 6.5 p.m. is altered at all, it would require to be made so much later as would enable it to pass the road somewhere on the line between Bray and the junction. This could only be done if the 6.5 were timed to run 40 minutes later than at present, but the 6.5 p.m. is used more largely by passengers for Bray and Greystones than by passengers for stations south of Greystones, and the former would object very much to the train being altered from 6.5 to 6.50, which would, in addition, entail a later arrival at Wexford and at stations on the main line than is desired by the public.

Lord Frederic Hamilton is, however, under a misapprehension in supposing that there is no connection between D and S.E. train for Wexford, Arklow, etc., and the Belfast train due at Annes street at 5.35 p.m., as there is a quite practicable connection for passengers taking a car from Annes street to Harcourt street Station. The main line train does not leave the latter until 5.5 p.m., and the margin of half an hour is more than adequate for the drive across town.

No complaint has reached me about a want of connection between these trains until I saw Lord Frederic Hamilton's statement.

* The whole letter except the first three paragraphs and the last one.

I may add that my company is, at all times, ready to make alterations in the train service, when they are found to be practicable and really necessary, in order to secure through connections with other Irish railways.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed),

A. G. REID.

G. E. Shanahan, Esq.,

Vice-regal Commissioner on Irish Railways,
22 St. Stephen's Green, N., Dublin.

V.

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER,
GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY (IRELAND).

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY CO. (IRELAND).

General Manager's Office

Dublin,

6th November, 1907.

SIR,—With reference to your favour of the 22nd ultimo (No. 3120), enclosing an extract from a communication from Lord Frederic Hamilton addressed to the Commission on the subject of train connections in Ireland, I beg to make the following observations dealing with the matters referred to by his lordship in the order set forth:—

(a) "That the G. S. and W. Company's Cork train reaches Dublin at 5.45 p.m., whereas the Great Northern express for Belfast leaves Amiens street at 5.50 p.m., rendering a connection from South to North impossible."

The traffic from the South of Ireland to the North is very small, and I know that the 12.15 p.m. train from Cork to Dublin is an old-established train, and has connections from the south-west of Ireland that could not be altered without leading to very considerable public inconvenience.

The 5.50 p.m. express from Dublin to Belfast runs in connection with the day mail from Boston. This train also carries the Irish mails for Scotland to Belfast for the mail steamer leaving Belfast at 9.30 p.m., thus affording only thirty minutes for the transfer of the mails from the station to the steamer. It cannot, therefore, be made to leave Dublin any later.

The service, however, from Cork is not dependent upon this train, as there is a train leaving Cork at 7.30 a.m. due in Dublin at 12.30 p.m., which gives time for luncheon in Dublin, and enables passengers to proceed North by the 3.0 p.m. express from Dublin, which makes connection throughout the whole of the North of Ireland.

In addition to this, the 3.30 p.m. mail train from Cork, due in Amiens street at 1.45 p.m., makes connection with the 8.30 p.m. night mail train to the North, thus affording two connections per day from the South to the North for an average of less than two passengers per day.

(b) "That the Great Northern train leaving Londonderry at 12.15 p.m. and Belfast at 2.20 p.m. reach Amiens street at 5.35 p.m.; whilst the Dublin and South-Eastern train from Wicklow, Ashlee, and Waterford leaves at 5.34 p.m."

This train into Dublin has connections from all parts of the North of Ireland, including the County Donegal. It is a very heavy train, and has been worked at its present time for several years. Experience has shown that the present time is a suitable one throughout, and that it would be most inadvisable to make any alteration.

As regards a connection to Wicklow, I may say the number of passengers are extremely few, and the Dublin and South-Eastern Railway could not, I think, well alter their train from Amiens street, inasmuch as it is one of a series of trains that leaves Waterford Row at 45 minutes past the hour throughout the whole of the day.

Passengers from the North, however, by this train can proceed to Wicklow and Waterford by driving from Amiens street to Harcourt street, and taking the 6.5 p.m. train from thence. The half-hour's margin is quite sufficient for this to be done.

(c) "That the 3.0 p.m. express from Dublin reaches Belfast at 5.4 p.m., and the Midland Company's train for Larne, Stranorlar, Glenties, and Seel, leave York road at 6.30 p.m., rendering a connection doubtful."

The 3.0 p.m. train from Dublin is a punctually-worked train, and carries passengers for the Larne route, and I am not aware of any instance in which this connection has failed to be made. The drive across Belfast to the Northern Counties Station can be accomplished in twelve minutes or less.

(d) "That the 7.30 a.m. express from Belfast arrives in Dublin at 10.30 a.m., and during the summer months the Railway express leaves Kingsbridge at 11 a.m., and that though passengers are not run from the Great Northern system to the Great Southern and Western, or vice versa, although there is a physical connection."

There is sufficient time to make connection in Dublin between the 7.30 a.m. express from Belfast and the 11 a.m. express from Kingsbridge to Kilbarney. The half-hour's margin is ample to drive by car from Amiens street to the Great Southern terminus.

This 7.30 a.m. train from Belfast to Dublin conveys the mails from Scotland to the Irish stations.

In addition to this, there is a train leaving Belfast at 9.25 a.m. due in Dublin at 1 o'clock, and the Great Southern Company have a train from Kingsbridge for Cork at 5 p.m. There is, therefore, a through connection as between Belfast and Cork, and this service has the advantage of affording passengers time for luncheon in Dublin.

The Great Southern Company did run for nearly twelve months a local service of trains between Amiens street and Kingsbridge, but I understand the average number of passengers was only 125 per train. That company did not think that this justified the continuance of the service, and it was accordingly withdrawn.

I have taken out the number of passengers booked from the Great Northern system to Cork and Kilbarney for the month of July last, the height of the tourist season, and find the total was 42, or equal to 1.60 passengers per day. In other months than the tourist season there would not be half this number.

(e) "Services from the tourist districts of Ashlee, etc., to the North of Ireland."

In making a journey from Castletown to Derry via Clancormie and Collooney, four independent lines are concerned. The number of through passengers between these localities is exceedingly small.

The existing service on the various lines is fixed to meet the general requirements, and to afford the greatest amount of public accommodation, and it is not desirable to inconvenience the large number of local people for the benefit of an occasional through passenger. In such cases it is usual for passengers to use the through express trains to and from the metropolis, by which the train service is quicker, although the distance travelled is longer.

There is not sufficient traffic to justify a through independent service between these two extreme points.

(f) "As to the suggestion that one through train per day should be run, via Dublin, between Belfast and Cork in each direction."

There is not a traffic, either existing or possible of cultivation, between Belfast and Cork sufficient to justify a through independent service, otherwise the companies would be glad to provide such trains.

The passenger traffic between the North and Kilbarney and Cork is confined to two or three summer months, and the existing service would appear to meet the requirements of the limited traffic.

The general managers of the Irish railways are aware that Dublin is not the chief objective point in

Ireland any more than London is not the chief objective point in England, but it is found from experience that a great many through passengers desire to break their journey in Dublin. This is shown in a very marked degree in the case of passengers having through tickets with England, and we find the same thing in the case of through passengers in Ireland.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(Signed) HENRY FLEWIS,
General Manager.

Geo. E. Shanahan, Esq.,
Secretary,

Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,
13 St. Stephen's Green, N., Dublin.

VII.

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.
General Manager's Office.

DUBLIN,
24th November, 1907.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 22nd ultimo, No. 2194-07, enclosing an extract from a letter received from Lord Frederic Hamilton on the subject of train service and other matters affecting Irish railways, and, in connection therewith, I desire to make the following observations in regard to points affecting this Commission.

The 12.15 p.m. train from Cork to Dublin is an old-established one, being about the heaviest train arriving at King'sbridge, and the present timings are found most suitable for the traffic on the system generally. To make the arrival in Dublin forty-five minutes earlier, so as to connect with the Belfast train, would cause considerable public inconvenience, and sacrifice the interests of the large majority to an occasional passenger who might use this train for the North in preference to the train leaving Cork at 7.30 a.m. and reaching Dublin at 12.30 p.m., which gives a connection by the 3 p.m. express from Antrim street for all parts of the North of Ireland, or the mail train leaving Cork at 3.30 p.m., and arriving at Antrim street at 7.48 p.m., which enables passengers to proceed by the 8.20 p.m. mail train for the North, both of which are excellent connections.

There is time to make the connection at Dublin between the 7.30 a.m. express from Belfast and the 11.0 a.m. express for Killybegs.

This company did run for nearly twelve months a local service of trains between King'sbridge and Antrim street, but the result worked out as an average of less than two passengers per train. There was, not, however, traffic to justify the continuance of the service, and it was withdrawn. The total number of passengers from the Great Northern system by the 7.30 a.m. train for Cork and Killybegs during the month of July—the height of the tourist season—was 42, an average of under 2 per day.

There is no traffic, either existing or prospective, between Belfast and Cork sufficient to warrant the suggested service of one train per day each way via Dublin, otherwise the companies concerned would readily provide it.

The passenger traffic between the North and Killybegs and Cork is practically confined to the summer months, and the service then given appears to fully meet the requirements of the limited traffic.

I am aware that Dublin is not the only objective point in Ireland, any more than London is in England, but, at the same time it is the principal one.

No doubt the Railway members of the Commission have had experience of similar complaints of this nature arising in England.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) C. DUFFY.

Geo. E. Shanahan, Esq.,
Secretary,

Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,
13 St. Stephen's Green, N., Dublin.

VII.

LETTER FROM THE MANAGER OF THE MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF IRELAND.

Manager's Office,

MEB/150. Broadstone Station,
Dublin.

22nd November, 1907.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 22nd ulto, enclosing extract from a communication from Lord Frederic Hamilton on the subject of train service, I observe that the connection relating to the M.G.W. Railway, to which his lordship refers, is from Castletbar, via Claremorris, to Londonderry, a distance of 166 miles, and not 208 miles, as stated.

It is the case, as his lordship mentions, that it is necessary, travelling via Claremorris and Enniskillen, to leave Castletbar at 8.25 a.m. in order to reach Londonderry at 8.55 p.m., this company's part of the journey being limited to the distance between Castletbar and Claremorris—viz., fifteen miles. It must be admitted that the time occupied for the whole journey is considerable, but the passengers who travel between these places are very few in number, and I am sure you will understand that the trains on the Midland Great Western Railway have to be arranged so as to give the best service to and from Dublin, and that the convenience of the greatest number of passengers should be the chief consideration. The train from Castletbar at 8.25 a.m. connects with practically the whole of our system, and is due at Dublin at 2.15 p.m., which affords a connection with the Great Northern Company's train from Dublin at 3 p.m. Our train has long been established, and has been found to suit the public convenience.

It has always been our desire to form connections where practicable with other railways, but on a system like the M.G.W.R., where the traffic, owing to the sparse population, are necessarily infrequent, it is difficult to accomplish this. As an instance of the manner in which we endeavour to make connections with other companies' trains, I may mention that we detain our 8.15 a.m. train from Dublin (which is one of our principal trains) for thirty-six minutes at Claremorris for the purpose of forming a connection with the Great Southern and Western Company's trains both north and south.

Lord Frederic Hamilton points out that with regard to the journey from Castletbar to Londonderry travellers via Dublin, although it is a considerably longer distance, effect a saving in time. I have no doubt the experience in England is similar, where it is often more expeditious for the passenger to travel to the metropolis, although the distance is greater, instead of depending on cross-country connections.

With regard to his lordship's concluding paragraph, that the managers of the Irish companies should discuss their minds of the idea that Dublin is the only objective point for travellers in Ireland, I would remark that Dublin is not, of course, the only objective point, but it must be regarded as the chief objective, as in England London is; and it is our experience that many through passengers prefer to travel via Dublin, and break their journey in that city.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) J. TAYLOR,
Manager.

Geo. E. Shanahan, Esq.,
Secretary,

Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,
13 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

VIII.

VICEROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

13 St. Stephen's Green, N., Dublin,

26th December, 1907.

MR LEATY.—Referring to your letter of the 16th October on the subject of the through train services and other matters in connection with Irish railways.

I am directed to inform you that the Vice-regal Commission, having communicated the substance of your remarks to the managers of the Great Northern, the Great Southern and Western, the Dublin and South-Eastern, the Midland Great Western, and the Midland (Northern Counties Committee) Railways, have received replies from the several managers concerned dealing with the various points discussed by your lordship, and copies of which I am to enclose for your information.

I am to add that if your lordship has no objection to the publication of the correspondence in this case, the Commission will be glad to consider the desirability of printing copies in the Appendix to their Report in course.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

(Signed) GEO. E. SHANAHAN,
Secretary.

The Right Hon. Lord Frederic Hamilton,
Baron's Court,
Newtownswewart, Co. Tyrone.

IX.

15 GR. COLLEGE STREET,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.,
JANUARY 16, 1900.

The Secretary,

Vice-regal Commission on Irish Railways.

SIR,—I have just returned to England, or would have answered before now your two letters to me of December 9 and December 20, 1907.

I have no objection to my letter and the replies of the Irish general managers being published in the Report, but I would wish to point out that these gentlemen in their letters almost invariably plead the fact of any given train "being a long-established one" as a reason for not making any change in its timing. In other words, because the Irish travelling public have for twenty years suffered great inconvenience owing to the lack of inter-communication in Ireland that they are to continue to do so.

Some of the general managers also point out that the lack of connections in Dublin can be obtained by the passengers taking an earlier train. That is a sufficiently obvious fact, but does not remedy the inconvenience to the traveller of having to spend an inordinate time making a comparatively short journey.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) FREDERIC HAMILTON.

APPENDIX No. 18.

STATEMENT sent in by Mr. E. O'Neill Clarke, R.E., County Surveyor, Leitrim, after his examination on the 17th October, 1907, containing a portion of his proof not dealt with in his evidence.

The total length of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway is 46½ miles, of which 13 are in County Cavan, 24 in County Leitrim, and 1½ in County Roscommon. For financial purposes the railway is divided into two parts, called Undertakings Nos. 1 and 2. Undertaking No. 1 comprises eight miles from Bellabreedy to Ballyheady, in County Cavan, the tax for which is levied from the guaranteeing area in Cavan. Undertaking No. 2 comprises four miles in County Cavan, from Ballyheady to the county boundary; 24

miles in County Leitrim, and 1½ in Roscommon, between the Shannon and Arigna Stations—in all 29½ miles. The tax on this length is raised from the guaranteeing area in the County of Leitrim, so that Leitrim pays for 5½ miles of line which are outside the county boundary—a perpetual charge of about £400 a year, after deducting contributions from the Treasury and profits on working, while Cavan pays for 4 miles less than its mileage, and Roscommon does not contribute at all.

TABLE showing Apportionment of Profit and Loss on Working between Cavan and Leitrim.

HALF-YEAR ENDING—	Total Profit on Working.	Cavan Profit.	Leitrim		If Profit were divided in proportion to Mileage			
			Profit.	Loss.	Cavan's Share.	Leitrim's Share.		
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1 May, 1903, — —	318 15 0	506 15 7	138 1 5	—	55 5 9	259 12 0		
1 Nov., 1903, — —	1,294 7 10	362 15 10	971 14 7	—	245 16 3	1,048 19 7		
1 May, 1904, — —	665 16 10	435 6 3	525 10 7	—	177 16 7	788 16 3		
1 Nov., 1904, — —	778 9 9	395 6 6	605 14 3	—	142 17 10	827 8 11		
1 May, 1905, — —	385 1 16	358 15 1	—	15 14 3	47 18 4	238 5 2		
1 Nov., 1905, — —	359 6 9	417 0 5	—	57 14 8	86 13 5	272 12 4		
1 May, 1906, — —	250 15 10	347 9 2	—	135 10 4	29 17 4	311 1 8		
1 Nov., 1906, — —	557 0 9	447 17 7	119 3 2	—	102 4 6	655 16 3		
1 May, 1907, — —	136 8 7	247 8 1	—	214 8 6	54 11 6	107 17 1		
1 Nov., 1907, — —	354 0 1	508 3 5	355 10 5	—	160 8 7	708 13 8		

APPENDIX No. 19.

STATEMENT of Rates, etc., transmitted by Mr. JOHN COLHOUN, Hon. Secretary, Strabane Mercantile Association, supplementary to the evidence given by him on the 17th October, 1907.

FARES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN ON DOMESTIC JOURNALS		Based on a 3/10 (1892) rate, raised to 4/8				
RAILWAYS.						
10 MILES.						
	1906.	1908.	Cwt. gr.	lbs.	Miles.	1892. 1906.
						s. d.
For two months,	13/4	23/2	1	0	0	10 5 7 Increase 1d.
Similarly with adults on State made railways.			2	0	0	10 5 10 „ 2d.
SAMPLE OF SCALE FOR "SMALLS" AS CHARGED BY THE			2	2	0	10 9 11 „ 2d.
G. N. R. (I.) Co.			3	0	0	10 9 1/- „ 2d.
Rate, 1892, begins at 3/6, and in 1908 is raised to 3/4 to begin.						

This scale is compiled from Company's own tables.

COMPARISON OF RATES AND FARES BETWEEN NEWTOWNSTEWART AND STRABANE

		10 Miles.			
		1892.	1906.		
Groceries,	5/- a/s	5/3 a/s	Sugar, Bacon, Oats, etc. . .	3/10 a/s	4/8 a/s

A sample of increased rates in G. N. R. (I.) Ry. Co. unless when fought against.

CLASS RATES ON G. N. R. (I.) RAILWAY.

Strabane and Newtownstewart. 10 miles.		Strabane and Londonderry. 14½ miles	
1892.	1906.	1892.	1906.
Classes.	Classes.	Classes.	Classes.
1 3/4	4/-	1 3/4	5/0
2 3/4	4/6	2 3/4	5/6
3 5/8	5/0	3 5/8	6/0
4 6/-	5/6	4 6/-	6/6
5 6/6	6/0	5 6/6	7/0
		6 7/0	7/6

APPENDIX No. 20.

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT transmitted by Mr. E. H. BENSON (Messrs. BENSON & SONS), Limerick, who gave evidence before the Commission on the 18th October, 1907.

October 21st, 1907.		COPIES OF ENCLOSURES.	
BENSON & SONS, 30, George-street, Limerick.		Particulars only.	
(To Sir C. SEaton, Railway Vice-Royal Commissioner.)		Particulars only.	
		s. d.	
Dear Sir,		1 Pp. Chickens,	5 0
When giving evidence before you at the Vice-Royal		Postage,	0 6
Railway Commission on the 15th instant, you asked			
me for particulars of compensation received from the		Sent to	5 6
Post Office for loss caused by delay in transit. I		" Mrs. Woodfall,	—
could not give you details out of my head then, but		" Nutfield,	—
I now enclose particulars hereunder of two such claims		" Weybridge "	—
paid for by the Post Office, in support of my evidence.		Sent March 28th, 1907,	—
I am,		and not delivered till April	—
Yours faithfully,		1st 1907. Bad in conse-	—
(Signed) E. H. BENSON.		quence of delay	—
		5s 6d paid by Post	—
		Office, June 5th, 1907.	—

APPENDIX No. 21.

COMPLAINTS as to delays to PIG TRAFFIC, referred to by Mr. WILLIAM SCULLY during his examination on the 18th October, 1907.

(Copies of two letters from the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, transmitted by Mr. SCULLY on 29th idem.)

I.

IRISH AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY,
OFFICES—22, LINCOLN-PLACE, DUBLIN.

29th October, 1907.

N.
A.3905/07.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of 27th inst., re our letter of 14th, which I re-enclose herewith. The complaint which we made to the M.G.W.R. Co. on 14th November, 1903 (of which I enclose you a copy herewith) was acknowledged by Mr. Tallow under M71/299.

his ——— of 16th November, 1903, in which Mr.

65395
Tallow promises that the matter should receive attention. I cannot find that any further reply was received from Mr. Tallow up to the end of 1904.

Yours truly,

(Signed), R. A. ANDERSON,

Secretary,

per H.F.N.

Mr. Wm. Scully, Jun.,
Ballaghmore.
Rosero.

II.

Copy

IRISH AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY,
H OFFICES—22, LINCOLN-PLACE, DUBLIN,
14480/03. 14th November, 1903

DEAR SIR,—I beg to bring under your notice the existing railway facilities for the transit of live pigs from Westport, County Mayo, to the City of Limerick. The Kilsnoona Co-operative Agricultural Society complains that a consignment of pigs forwarded by it on Wednesday, the 11th inst., from Westport to Limerick, did not reach its destination until Friday. It appears that the consignment had to be transhipped at Clonsilla from your line to the Great Southern and Western's line. The fact of pigs having to travel for such a long time naturally depreciates their market value, and that in the case in question each pig lost four and five pounds weight, which means a great deal to the poor and struggling farmers of the County Mayo.

It is suggested by the Kilsnoona Society that consignments of pigs from Westport should be booked by the afternoon train from that place, and sent via Athlone to Limerick, by which route they would arrive the following morning without having to be transhipped in transit. I shall be glad if you will give this suggestion your kind consideration.

Yours truly,

(Signed) C. G. RUSSELL,

Secretary (per fax).

Joseph Tallow, Esq.,
Manager,
Midland Great Western Railway Co.

APPENDIX No. 22.

RATES and REGULATIONS for TRADERS' TICKETS generally in use on the IRISH RAILWAYS.

(Copy of Document handed in by Mr. Tallow on behalf of the Associated Irish Railway Companies during the examination of Mr. Patrick Kirby on 24th October, 1907.)

1. Contract Tickets are issued, as per scale annexed, subject to the following conditions, to all traders, except Cattle Dealers, or Cattle Salesmen, without regard to the particular trades in which they may be engaged. Application for such Tickets or renewals thereof, to be addressed to the Goods Manager of the Company.

2. Traders' Tickets will be issued at the rate of one ticket for each £250 of actual receipts to the Company.

3. In calculating the receipts on Traffic, the full amount received on Local, and the proportion accruing to the Company on Through Traffic, will be credited for the twelve months preceding the date of application for ticket, but whenever required the trader shall produce the receipted accounts for payments made to the Company before a Traders' Ticket can be issued.

4. Traders taking out more than one ticket, as their traffic may warrant, for different representatives of the person or firm, will be allowed discount off the gross amount as follows:—

On Two Tickets,	12½ per cent
On Three Tickets,	20 "
On Four or more Tickets,	25 "

5. The Tickets will only be issued to the person or firm paying the Company the freight, and only to the acting partners or persons exclusively in the employment of the firm; but under special circumstances

Traders' Tickets may be issued to the Trader who does not pay carriage for his traffic, provided a written guarantee be handed to the Company with each application stating that he had arranged that no other Trader would claim on the same traffic.

6. No Ticket will be issued for a less period than twelve months.

7. The Tickets are not transferable, and can only be issued in one name.

8. When a holder requires an alteration of district during the currency of his Ticket, the original Ticket shall be cancelled, and the full amount for the unexpired period be allowed as a payment on account of the new Ticket required, which shall be for the usual period of twelve months.

9. The mileage for which a Ticket is issued must be continuous and not in divided sections of the line.

10. The production of these Tickets when travelling will be uniformly required.

11. The Company reserve the right to decline to issue any Ticket that may be applied for without assigning any reason.

12. The holders of Traders' Tickets shall be subject to same rules and regulations when travelling as ordinary passengers.

CATTLE DEALERS and CATTLE SALESMEN.

Traders' Tickets are issued to Cattle Dealers and Cattle Salesmen at a reduction of 25 per cent.

TRADERS' TICKETS.

SCALE showing the Rates chargeable at each Mile up to 80 Miles.

DISTANCE.	Traffic of £250 per annum.			Traffic of £500 per annum.			Traffic of £750 per annum.			Traffic of £1,000 per annum.		
Miles.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
Min'm 25	38 0	7 50	5 0	9 10	7 0	4 15	9 0	6 10	4 10	8 10	6 0	4 5
25	10 4	7 15	5 4	9 10	7 5	4 18	9 5	6 14	4 13	8 15	6 4	4 8
27	10 12	8 0	5 8	10 1	7 9	5 2	9 10	6 18	4 16	8 19	6 7	4 10
28	10 18	8 5	5 12	10 7	7 14	5 6	9 15	7 2	4 19	9 4	6 11	4 12
29	11 4	8 10	5 16	10 12	7 18	5 9	10 0	7 6	5 2	9 8	6 14	4 15
30	11 10	8 15	5 0	10 18	8 3	5 12	10 5	7 10	5 5	9 12	6 18	4 18
31	11 16	9 0	5 4	11 3	8 7	5 16	10 10	7 14	5 8	9 17	7 1	5 0
32	12 2	9 5	5 8	11 9	8 12	5 0	10 15	7 18	5 11	9 22	7 5	5 3
33	12 8	9 10	6 12	11 14	8 16	5 5	11 0	8 2	5 14	10 0	7 8	5 5
34	12 14	9 15	6 16	12 0	9 1	5 7	11 5	8 6	5 17	10 11	7 12	5 8
35	13 0	10 0	7 0	12 5	9 5	6 10	11 10	8 10	6 0	10 15	7 15	5 10
36	13 6	10 5	7 4	12 11	9 10	6 14	11 15	8 14	6 3	11 0	7 19	5 13
37	13 12	10 10	7 8	12 16	9 14	6 17	12 0	8 18	6 6	11 4	8 2	5 15
38	13 18	10 15	7 12	13 2	9 19	7 1	12 5	9 2	6 9	11 9	8 6	5 18
39	14 4	11 0	7 16	13 7	10 2	7 4	12 10	9 6	6 12	11 12	8 9	6 0
40	14 10	11 5	8 0	13 13	10 8	7 8	12 15	9 10	6 15	11 18	8 13	6 3
41	14 16	11 10	8 4	13 18	10 12	7 11	13 0	9 14	6 18	12 2	8 16	6 5
42	15 2	11 15	8 8	14 4	10 17	7 15	13 5	9 18	7 1	12 7	8 20	6 8
43	15 8	12 0	9 12	14 9	11 1	7 18	13 10	10 2	7 4	12 11	8 3	6 10
44	15 14	12 5	9 16	14 15	11 6	8 2	13 15	10 6	7 7	12 16	8 7	6 12
45	16 0	12 10	9 0	15 0	11 10	8 5	14 0	10 10	7 10	13 0	9 10	6 15
46	16 6	12 15	9 4	15 5	11 15	8 9	14 5	10 14	7 13	13 5	9 14	6 18
47	16 12	12 20	9 8	15 11	11 19	8 12	14 10	10 18	7 16	13 9	9 17	7 0
48	16 18	13 5	9 12	15 17	12 4	8 16	14 15	11 2	7 19	13 14	10 1	7 3
49	17 4	13 10	9 16	16 2	12 8	8 19	15 0	11 6	8 2	13 18	10 4	7 5
50	17 10	13 15	10 0	16 8	12 13	9 2	15 5	11 10	8 5	14 3	10 8	7 8
51	17 16	13 19	10 3	16 12	12 16	9 5	15 9	11 13	8 7	14 7	10 11	7 10
52	18 0	14 3	10 6	16 17	12 0	9 8	15 14	11 17	8 10	14 11	10 14	7 12
53	18 6	14 7	10 9	17 1	12 5	9 10	15 18	12 0	8 12	14 15	10 17	7 14
54	18 10	14 11	10 12	17 6	12 7	9 13	16 2	12 3	8 14	14 19	11 0	7 16
55	18 15	14 15	10 15	17 10	12 10	9 15	16 6	12 6	8 16	15 3	11 3	7 18
56	19 0	14 19	10 18	17 15	12 14	9 18	16 11	12 10	8 19	15 7	11 6	8 0
57	19 5	15 3	11 1	17 19	12 17	10 0	16 15	12 13	9 1	15 11	11 9	8 2
58	19 10	15 7	11 4	18 4	14 1	10 3	16 19	12 16	9 2	15 15	11 12	8 4
59	19 15	15 11	11 7	18 8	14 4	10 5	17 3	12 19	9 5	15 19	11 15	8 6
60	20 0	15 15	11 10	18 12	14 8	10 8	17 8	13 2	9 8	16 3	11 18	8 8
61	20 5	15 19	11 13	18 17	14 11	10 10	17 12	13 6	9 10	16 7	12 1	8 10
62	20 10	16 3	11 16	19 3	14 15	10 13	17 16	13 9	9 12	16 11	12 4	8 12
63	20 15	16 7	11 19	19 8	14 18	10 15	18 0	13 12	9 14	16 15	12 7	8 14
64	21 0	16 11	12 2	19 13	15 2	10 18	18 5	13 16	9 17	16 19	12 10	8 16
65	21 5	16 15	12 5	19 18	15 5	11 0	18 10	13 19	9 19	17 3	12 13	8 18
66	21 10	16 19	12 8	20 0	15 9	11 3	18 15	14 2	10 1	17 7	12 16	8 20
67	21 15	17 3	12 11	20 4	15 12	11 5	18 19	14 6	10 3	17 11	12 19	9 2
68	22 0	17 7	12 14	20 9	15 16	11 8	19 2	14 9	10 6	17 15	13 2	9 4
69	22 5	17 11	12 17	20 13	15 19	11 10	19 6	14 12	10 8	17 19	13 5	9 6
70	22 10	17 15	12 0	20 18	16 3	11 13	19 10	14 15	10 10	18 3	13 8	9 8
71	22 15	17 19	12 3	21 2	16 6	11 16	19 14	14 18	10 12	18 7	13 11	9 10
72	22 20	18 3	12 6	21 7	16 10	11 18	19 19	15 2	10 15	18 11	13 14	9 12
73	22 25	18 7	12 9	21 11	16 13	12 0	20 3	15 5	10 17	18 15	13 17	9 14
74	22 30	18 11	12 12	21 16	16 17	12 3	20 7	15 8	10 19	18 19	14 0	9 16
75	23 5	18 15	12 15	22 0	17 0	12 5	20 11	15 11	11 1	19 3	14 3	9 18
76	23 10	18 19	12 18	22 5	17 4	12 8	20 16	15 15	11 4	19 7	14 6	10 0
77	23 15	19 3	14 1	22 9	17 7	12 10	21 0	15 18	11 6	19 11	14 9	10 2
78	24 10	19 7	14 4	22 14	17 11	12 13	21 4	16 1	11 8	19 15	14 12	10 4
79	24 15	19 11	14 7	22 18	17 15	12 15	21 8	16 4	11 10	19 19	14 15	10 6
80	25 0	19 15	14 10	23 3	17 18	12 18	21 12	16 8	11 13	20 3	15 18	10 8

TRADERS' TICKETS.

SCALE showing the Rate chargeable at each Mile up to 80 Miles.

Distance.	Traffic of £2,000 per annum.			Traffic of £3,000 per annum.			Traffic of £4,000 per annum.			Traffic of £5,000 per annum.		
	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
Miles.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
25	7 5	5 2	3 12	6 3	4 7	3 1	5 5	3 14	2 12	4 9	3 3	2 4
26	7 9	5 5	3 15	6 6	4 9	3 3	5 8	3 16	2 14	4 11	3 4	2 6
27	7 13	5 8	3 17	6 9	4 12	3 5	5 10	3 18	2 15	4 13	3 6	2 7
28	7 16	5 11	3 19	6 12	4 14	3 7	5 13	4 0	2 17	4 15	3 8	2 8
29	8 0	5 14	4 1	6 15	4 17	3 9	5 16	4 2	2 19	4 18	3 10	2 10
30	8 4	5 17	4 2	6 19	4 19	3 11	5 18	4 4	2 20	5 0	3 12	2 11
31	8 7	6 0	4 5	7 2	5 2	3 13	6 1	4 6	3 1	5 3	3 14	2 12
32	8 11	6 3	4 8	7 5	5 4	3 15	6 4	4 8	3 3	5 5	3 16	2 14
33	8 15	6 6	4 10	7 8	5 7	3 16	6 7	4 11	3 5	5 7	3 18	2 15
34	8 19	6 9	4 12	7 12	5 10	3 18	6 10	4 13	3 6	5 10	4 0	2 16
35	9 3	6 12	4 14	7 15	5 12	4 0	6 13	4 15	3 8	5 13	4 1	2 17
36	9 7	6 15	4 16	7 19	5 15	4 2	6 15	4 17	3 10	5 15	4 3	2 19
37	9 11	6 18	4 18	8 2	5 17	4 3	6 18	4 19	3 11	5 17	4 4	3 0
38	9 15	7 1	5 0	8 5	6 0	4 5	7 1	5 2	3 12	6 0	4 6	3 1
39	9 18	7 4	5 2	8 8	6 3	4 7	7 3	5 4	3 14	6 2	4 8	3 2
40	10 2	7 7	5 4	8 12	6 5	4 9	7 6	5 6	3 16	6 4	4 10	3 3
41	10 6	7 10	5 6	8 15	6 8	4 11	7 9	5 9	3 17	6 7	4 12	3 4
42	10 10	7 13	5 8	8 18	6 10	4 13	7 12	5 11	3 19	6 9	4 14	3 5
43	10 14	7 16	5 10	9 1	6 12	4 14	7 14	5 13	4 0	6 11	4 16	3 6
44	10 18	7 19	5 13	9 5	6 15	4 16	7 17	5 15	4 2	6 13	4 18	3 8
45	11 1	8 2	5 15	9 8	6 17	4 18	8 0	5 17	4 3	6 16	4 19	3 11
46	11 5	8 5	5 17	9 11	7 0	4 19	8 3	5 19	4 4	6 18	5 1	3 12
47	11 9	8 8	5 19	9 15	7 3	5 1	8 6	6 1	4 5	7 1	5 3	3 13
48	11 13	8 11	6 1	9 18	7 5	5 3	8 9	6 3	4 8	7 3	5 5	3 15
49	11 17	8 14	6 3	10 1	7 8	5 5	8 11	6 5	4 9	7 5	5 7	3 16
50	12 1	8 17	6 5	10 5	7 12	5 7	8 14	6 9	4 11	7 8	5 10	3 17
51	12 4	8 19	6 7	10 7	7 12	5 8	8 16	6 9	4 12	7 10	5 10	3 18
52	12 7	9 2	6 9	10 10	7 14	5 10	8 19	6 11	4 14	7 12	5 12	3 9
53	12 11	9 4	6 11	10 13	7 16	5 12	9 1	6 13	4 15	7 14	5 13	4 1
54	12 14	9 7	6 13	10 16	7 19	5 14	9 4	6 15	4 17	7 16	5 15	4 2
55	12 18	9 10	6 15	10 19	8 1	5 15	9 6	6 17	4 18	7 18	5 16	4 3
56	13 1	9 12	6 17	11 2	8 3	5 16	9 8	6 19	4 19	8 0	5 18	4 4
57	13 4	9 15	6 18	11 5	8 6	5 17	9 10	7 1	5 0	8 2	6 0	4 5
58	13 8	9 17	6 19	11 8	8 8	5 18	9 13	7 3	5 1	8 5	6 1	4 6
59	13 11	10 0	7 1	11 11	8 10	5 0	9 16	7 5	5 2	8 7	6 3	4 7
60	13 15	10 2	7 3	11 14	8 12	5 2	9 19	7 8	5 3	8 9	6 4	4 8
61	13 18	10 5	7 4	11 16	8 14	5 3	10 1	7 8	5 4	9 11	6 6	4 9
62	14 1	10 7	7 6	11 19	8 16	5 4	10 3	7 10	5 5	9 13	6 8	4 10
63	14 5	10 10	7 8	12 2	8 18	5 6	10 6	7 12	5 7	9 16	6 9	4 11
64	14 8	10 12	7 10	12 5	8 0	5 8	10 8	7 14	5 8	9 17	6 10	4 12
65	14 12	10 15	7 11	12 8	8 3	5 9	10 11	7 16	5 9	9 19	6 12	4 13
66	14 15	10 18	7 13	12 11	8 5	5 10	10 13	7 18	5 11	9 1	6 13	4 14
67	14 18	11 0	7 15	12 14	8 7	5 12	10 16	8 0	5 12	9 3	6 15	4 15
68	15 2	11 3	7 16	12 17	8 10	5 13	10 18	8 2	5 13	9 5	6 17	4 16
69	15 5	11 5	7 18	12 0	8 12	5 14	11 1	8 3	5 14	9 7	6 18	4 17
70	15 9	11 8	8 0	12 3	8 14	5 16	11 3	8 5	5 16	9 9	7 0	4 18
71	15 12	11 10	8 1	12 5	8 16	5 17	11 5	8 7	5 17	9 11	7 2	4 19
72	15 15	11 13	8 3	12 8	8 18	5 19	11 8	8 8	5 18	9 14	7 3	5 0
73	15 19	11 15	8 5	12 11	9 0	5 0	11 10	8 10	5 19	9 16	7 5	5 1
74	16 2	11 18	8 7	12 14	9 2	5 2	11 13	8 12	6 1	9 18	7 6	5 2
75	16 6	12 1	8 8	12 17	9 5	5 3	11 16	8 14	6 2	10 0	7 8	5 4
76	16 9	12 3	8 10	14 0	9 7	5 5	12 0	8 16	6 3	10 2	7 10	5 4
77	16 12	12 5	8 12	14 3	9 9	5 7	12 3	8 18	6 4	10 4	7 11	5 5
78	16 16	12 8	8 13	14 6	9 11	5 9	12 6	8 19	6 5	10 6	7 12	5 6
79	16 19	12 11	8 15	14 9	9 13	5 11	12 9	9 1	6 7	10 8	7 14	5 7
80	17 3	12 13	8 17	14 12	9 15	5 13	12 12	9 3	6 8	10 10	7 15	5 8

TRADERS' TICKETS.

SCALE—continued—£1 Miles up to 140 Miles.

DISTANCE.	Traffic of £250 per annum.			Traffic of £300 per annum.			Traffic of £400 per annum.			Traffic of £1,000 per annum.		
	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.
81	25 8	19 10	14 13	23 7	14 1	12 0	21 17	16 11	11 15	20 7	15 1	10 10
82	25 10	20 3	14 16	23 12	14 5	12 3	22 1	16 14	11 17	20 11	15 4	10 12
83	25 15	20 7	14 19	23 16	14 8	12 5	22 5	16 17	11 19	20 16	15 7	10 14
84	26 0	20 11	15 2	24 1	14 12	12 8	22 10	17 1	12 2	20 19	15 10	10 16
85	26 5	20 15	15 5	24 5	14 15	12 10	22 14	17 4	12 4	21 3	15 13	10 18
86	26 10	20 19	15 8	24 10	14 19	12 13	22 18	17 7	12 6	21 7	15 16	11 0
87	26 15	21 2	15 11	24 14	15 2	12 15	22 22	17 10	12 8	21 11	15 19	11 2
88	27 0	21 7	15 14	24 19	15 6	12 18	22 27	17 14	12 11	21 15	16 2	11 5
89	27 5	21 11	15 17	25 3	15 9	13 0	23 1	17 17	12 13	21 19	16 5	11 8
90	27 10	21 15	15 0	25 8	15 12	13 3	23 5	18 0	12 15	22 3	16 8	11 8
91	27 15	21 19	15 3	25 12	15 16	13 5	23 10	18 3	12 17	22 7	16 11	11 10
92	28 0	22 3	15 6	25 17	16 0	14 8	24 4	18 7	13 0	22 11	16 14	11 12
93	28 5	22 7	15 9	26 1	16 3	14 10	24 8	18 10	13 2	22 15	16 17	11 14
94	28 10	22 11	15 12	26 5	16 7	14 13	24 12	18 13	13 4	22 19	17 0	11 16
95	28 15	22 15	15 15	26 10	16 10	14 15	24 16	18 16	13 6	23 3	17 3	11 18
96	29 0	22 19	15 18	26 15	16 14	14 18	25 1	19 0	13 9	23 7	17 6	12 0
97	29 5	22 3	17 1	26 19	16 17	15 0	25 5	19 3	13 11	23 11	17 9	12 2
98	29 10	22 7	17 4	27 4	17 1	15 3	25 10	19 6	13 13	23 15	17 12	12 4
99	29 15	22 11	17 7	27 8	17 4	15 5	25 14	19 9	13 15	23 19	17 15	12 6
100	30 0	22 15	17 10	27 13	17 8	15 8	25 18	19 13	13 18	24 3	17 18	12 8
101	30 4	22 19	17 13	27 17	17 11	15 10	26 1	19 15	14 0	24 6	18 0	12 10
102	30 8	23 1	17 15	28 1	17 14	15 12	26 5	19 18	14 2	24 10	18 2	12 11
103	30 12	23 4	17 17	28 4	17 16	15 14	26 8	19 20	14 4	24 13	18 4	12 13
104	30 16	23 7	17 19	28 8	17 19	15 16	26 12	19 23	14 7	24 16	18 7	12 14
105	31 0	23 10	18 1	28 12	18 2	15 18	26 16	19 26	14 9	24 19	18 9	12 16
106	31 4	23 13	18 4	28 16	18 5	16 0	26 19	19 29	14 12	25 3	18 12	12 17
107	31 8	23 16	18 6	28 19	18 7	16 2	27 3	19 32	14 15	25 6	18 14	12 19
108	31 12	23 19	18 8	29 3	18 10	16 4	27 6	19 35	14 18	25 9	18 16	13 0
109	31 16	23 22	18 10	29 7	18 13	16 6	27 9	19 38	14 21	25 12	18 18	13 2
110	32 0	23 25	18 13	29 11	18 16	16 8	27 13	19 41	14 24	25 15	19 1	13 3
111	32 4	23 28	18 15	29 14	18 19	16 10	27 16	19 44	14 27	25 19	19 3	13 5
112	32 8	23 31	18 17	29 18	19 1	16 13	28 0	19 47	14 30	26 2	19 5	13 6
113	32 12	23 34	18 19	29 21	19 4	16 15	28 3	19 50	14 33	26 5	19 7	13 8
114	32 16	23 37	19 2	29 25	19 7	16 18	28 7	19 53	14 36	26 9	19 10	13 9
115	32 20	23 40	19 4	29 28	19 10	16 20	28 10	19 56	14 39	26 12	19 13	13 11
116	32 24	23 43	19 6	29 32	19 13	16 23	28 14	19 59	14 42	26 15	19 14	13 13
117	32 28	23 46	19 8	29 35	19 16	16 25	28 17	20 0	14 45	26 18	19 16	13 14
118	32 32	23 49	19 11	29 39	19 19	16 28	28 21	20 3	14 48	26 21	19 18	13 16
119	32 36	23 52	19 13	29 42	19 22	16 30	28 24	20 6	14 51	26 24	19 20	13 17
120	32 40	23 55	19 15	29 46	19 25	16 33	28 28	20 9	14 54	26 27	19 23	13 18
121	32 44	23 58	19 18	29 49	19 28	16 35	28 31	20 12	14 57	26 30	19 25	13 20
122	32 48	24 0	19 20	29 53	19 31	16 38	28 35	20 15	15 0	26 33	19 28	13 21
123	32 52	24 4	19 23	29 56	19 34	16 40	28 38	20 18	15 3	26 36	19 30	13 23
124	32 56	24 7	19 25	29 60	19 37	16 43	28 42	20 21	15 6	26 39	19 33	13 24
125	33 0	24 10	19 28	29 63	19 40	16 45	28 45	20 24	15 9	26 42	19 35	13 26
126	33 4	24 13	19 30	29 67	19 43	16 48	28 49	20 27	15 12	26 45	19 38	13 27
127	33 8	24 16	19 33	29 70	19 46	16 50	28 52	20 30	15 15	26 48	19 40	13 29
128	33 12	24 19	19 35	29 74	19 49	16 53	28 56	20 33	15 18	26 51	19 43	13 30
129	33 16	24 22	19 38	29 77	19 52	16 55	28 59	20 36	15 21	26 54	19 45	13 32
130	33 20	24 25	19 40	29 81	19 55	16 58	29 0	20 39	15 24	26 57	19 48	13 33
131	33 24	24 28	19 43	29 84	19 58	17 0	29 4	20 42	15 27	27 0	19 50	13 35
132	33 28	24 31	19 45	29 88	20 0	17 3	29 8	20 45	15 30	27 3	19 53	13 36
133	33 32	24 34	19 48	29 91	20 3	17 5	29 11	20 48	15 33	27 6	19 55	13 38
134	33 36	24 37	19 50	29 95	20 6	17 8	29 15	20 51	15 36	27 9	19 58	13 39
135	33 40	24 40	19 53	29 98	20 9	17 10	29 18	20 54	15 39	27 12	20 0	13 41
136	33 44	24 43	19 55	29 102	20 12	17 13	29 22	20 57	15 42	27 15	20 3	13 42
137	33 48	24 46	19 58	29 105	20 15	17 15	29 25	21 0	15 45	27 18	20 5	13 44
138	33 52	24 49	19 60	29 109	20 18	17 18	29 29	21 3	15 48	27 21	20 8	13 45
139	33 56	24 52	19 63	29 112	20 21	17 20	29 32	21 6	15 51	27 24	20 10	13 47
140	34 0	24 55	19 65	29 116	20 24	17 23	29 36	21 9	15 54	27 27	20 13	13 48
141	34 4	24 58	19 68	29 119	20 27	17 25	29 39	21 12	15 57	27 30	20 15	13 50
142	34 8	25 0	19 70	29 123	20 30	17 28	29 43	21 15	16 0	27 33	20 18	13 51
143	34 12	25 4	19 73	29 126	20 33	17 30	29 46	21 18	16 3	27 36	20 20	13 53
144	34 16	25 7	19 75	29 130	20 36	17 33	29 50	21 21	16 6	27 39	20 23	13 54
145	34 20	25 10	19 78	29 133	20 39	17 35	29 53	21 24	16 9	27 42	20 25	13 56
146	34 24	25 13	19 80	29 137	20 42	17 38	29 57	21 27	16 12	27 45	20 28	13 57
147	34 28	25 16	19 83	29 140	20 45	17 40	29 60	21 30	16 15	27 48	20 30	13 59
148	34 32	25 19	19 85	29 144	20 48	17 43	29 64	21 33	16 18	27 51	20 33	14 0
149	34 36	25 22	19 88	29 147	20 51	17 45	29 67	21 36	16 21	27 54	20 35	14 1
150	34 40	25 25	19 90	29 151	20 54	17 48	29 71	21 39	16 24	27 57	20 38	14 2
151	34 44	25 28	19 93	29 154	20 57	17 50	29 74	21 42	16 27	28 0	20 40	14 4
152	34 48	25 31	19 95	29 158	21 0	17 53	29 78	21 45	16 30	28 3	20 43	14 5
153	34 52	25 34	19 98	29 161	21 3	17 55	29 81	21 48	16 33	28 6	20 45	14 7
154	34 56	25 37	19 100	29 165	21 6	17 58	29 85	21 51	16 36	28 9	20 48	14 8
155	35 0	25 40	19 103	29 168	21 9	18 0	29 88	21 54	16 39	28 12	20 50	14 10
156	35 4	25 43	19 105	29 172	21 12	18 3	29 92	21 57	16 42	28 15	20 53	14 11
157	35 8	25 46	19 108	29 175	21 15	18 5	29 95	22 0	16 45	28 18	20 55	14 13
158	35 12	25 49	19 110	29 179	21 18	18 8	29 99	22 3	16 48	28 21	20 58	14 14
159	35 16	25 52	19 113	29 182	21 21	18 10	29 102	22 6	16 51	28 24	21 0	14 16
160	35 20	25 55	19 115	29 186	21 24	18 13	29 106	22 9	16 54	28 27	21 3	14 17
161	35 24	25 58	19 118	29 189	21 27	18 15	29 109	22 12	16 57	28 30	21 5	14 19
162	35 28	26 0	19 120	29 193	21 30	18 18	29 113	22 15	17 0	28 33	21 8	14 20
163	35 32	26 4	19 123	29 196	21 33	18 20	29 116	22 18	17 3	28 36	21 10	14 22
164	35 36	26 7	19 125	29 200	21 36	18 23	29 120	22 21	17 6	28 39	21 13	14 23
165	35 40	26 10	19 128	29 203	21 39	18 25	29 123	22 24	17 9	28 42	21 15	14 25
166	35 44	26 13	19 130	29 207	21 42	18 28	29 127	22 27	17 12	28 45	21 18	14 26
167	35 48	26 16	19 133	29 210	21 45	18 30	29 130	22 30	17 15	28 48	21 20	14 28
168	35 52	26 19	19 135	29 214	21 48	18 33	29 134	22 33	17 18	28 51	21 23	14 29
169	35 56	26 22	19 138	29 217	21 51	18 35	29 137	22 36	17 21	28 54	21 25	14 31
170	36 0	26 25	19 140	29 221	21 54	18 38	29 141	22 39	17 24	28 57	21 28	14 32
171	36 4	26 28	19 143									

TRADERS' TICKETS.

SCALE—continued—81 Miles up to 140 Miles.

DISTANCE.	Traffic of \$2,000 per annum.			Traffic of \$3,000 per annum.			Traffic of \$4,000 per annum.			Traffic of \$5,000 per annum.		
	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
Miles.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.	£ s.
81	17 6	12 16	8 18	14 14	10 17	7 11	12 09	9 5	6 9	10 12	7 17	5 9
82	17 9	12 18	9 0	14 17	10 19	7 13	12 12	9 7	6 10	10 14	7 19	5 11
83	17 13	12 1	9 3	15 0	11 3	7 15	12 15	9 9	6 12	10 16	7 21	5 13
84	17 16	12 3	9 4	15 3	11 4	7 16	12 18	9 11	6 13	10 19	7 23	5 14
85	18 0	12 6	9 5	15 6	11 6	7 17	12 0	9 12	6 14	11 2	7 26	5 15
86	18 3	12 9	9 7	15 9	11 8	7 19	12 3	9 15	6 15	11 4	7 28	5 16
87	18 6	12 11	9 8	15 12	11 10	8 1	12 6	9 16	6 17	11 6	7 30	5 17
88	18 10	12 14	9 10	15 15	11 13	8 3	12 8	9 18	6 18	11 8	7 32	5 18
89	18 13	12 16	9 12	15 17	11 15	8 5	12 10	9 0	6 19	11 10	7 34	5 19
90	18 17	12 19	9 14	16 0	11 17	8 8	12 13	9 1	7 0	11 13	7 36	5 20
91	19 0	13 1	9 15	16 3	11 19	8 6	13 15	9 3	7 1	11 14	7 38	5 21
92	19 3	13 4	9 17	16 6	12 1	8 7	13 17	9 5	7 3	11 16	7 40	5 22
93	19 7	13 6	9 19	16 9	12 3	8 9	14 0	9 7	7 4	11 18	7 42	5 23
94	19 10	13 9	10 1	16 12	12 6	8 11	14 2	9 9	7 5	12 0	7 44	5 24
95	19 14	13 12	10 3	16 15	12 8	8 13	14 5	9 11	7 6	12 2	7 46	5 25
96	19 17	13 14	10 4	16 17	12 10	8 15	14 7	9 13	7 7	12 4	7 48	5 26
97	20 0	13 17	10 6	17 0	12 12	8 17	14 9	9 15	7 9	12 6	7 50	5 27
98	20 4	13 20	10 7	17 3	12 14	8 18	14 12	9 17	7 10	12 8	7 52	5 28
99	20 7	13 23	10 9	17 6	12 16	8 19	14 14	9 19	7 11	12 10	7 54	5 29
100	20 11	13 26	10 11	17 9	12 18	8 19	14 17	9 20	7 13	12 12	7 56	5 30
101	20 15	13 29	10 13	17 12	12 21	9 0	14 20	9 23	7 15	12 15	7 58	5 31
102	20 19	13 32	10 15	17 15	12 24	9 1	14 23	9 26	7 17	12 18	7 60	5 32
103	20 23	13 35	10 17	17 18	12 27	9 3	14 26	9 29	7 19	12 21	7 62	5 33
104	21 0	13 38	10 19	17 21	12 30	9 4	14 29	9 32	7 21	12 24	7 64	5 34
105	21 4	13 41	10 21	17 24	12 33	9 5	14 32	9 35	7 23	12 27	7 66	5 35
106	21 8	13 44	10 23	17 27	12 36	9 6	14 35	9 38	7 25	12 30	7 68	5 36
107	21 12	13 47	10 25	17 30	12 39	9 7	14 38	9 41	7 27	12 33	7 70	5 37
108	21 16	13 50	10 27	17 33	12 42	9 8	14 41	9 44	7 29	12 36	7 72	5 38
109	21 20	13 53	10 29	17 36	12 45	9 9	14 44	9 47	7 31	12 39	7 74	5 39
110	21 24	13 56	10 31	17 39	12 48	9 10	14 47	9 50	7 33	12 42	7 76	5 40
111	22 0	14 0	10 33	17 42	12 51	9 11	14 50	9 53	7 35	12 45	7 78	5 41
112	22 4	14 4	10 35	17 45	12 54	9 12	14 53	9 56	7 37	12 48	7 80	5 42
113	22 8	14 7	10 37	17 48	12 57	9 13	14 56	9 59	7 39	12 51	7 82	5 43
114	22 12	14 10	10 39	17 51	13 0	9 14	14 59	10 0	7 41	12 54	7 84	5 44
115	22 16	14 13	10 41	17 54	13 3	9 15	15 0	10 1	7 43	12 57	7 86	5 45
116	22 20	14 16	10 43	17 57	13 6	9 16	15 3	10 3	7 45	13 0	7 88	5 46
117	22 24	14 19	10 45	18 0	13 9	9 17	15 6	10 6	7 47	13 3	7 90	5 47
118	22 28	14 22	10 47	18 3	13 12	9 18	15 9	10 9	7 49	13 6	7 92	5 48
119	22 32	14 25	10 49	18 6	13 15	9 19	15 12	10 12	7 51	13 9	7 94	5 49
120	22 36	14 28	10 51	18 9	13 18	10 0	15 15	10 15	7 53	13 12	7 96	5 50
121	23 0	14 31	10 53	18 12	13 21	10 1	15 18	10 18	7 55	13 15	7 98	5 51
122	23 4	14 34	10 55	18 15	13 24	10 2	15 21	10 21	7 57	13 18	7 100	5 52
123	23 8	14 37	10 57	18 18	13 27	10 3	15 24	10 24	7 59	13 21	7 102	5 53
124	23 12	14 40	10 59	18 21	13 30	10 4	15 27	10 27	8 0	13 24	7 104	5 54
125	23 16	14 43	11 0	18 24	13 33	10 5	15 30	10 30	8 2	13 27	7 106	5 55
126	23 20	14 46	11 1	18 27	13 36	10 6	15 33	10 33	8 4	13 30	7 108	5 56
127	23 24	14 49	11 3	18 30	13 39	10 7	15 36	10 36	8 6	13 33	7 110	5 57
128	23 28	14 52	11 5	18 33	13 42	10 8	15 39	10 39	8 8	13 36	7 112	5 58
129	23 32	14 55	11 7	18 36	13 45	10 9	15 42	10 42	8 10	13 39	7 114	5 59
130	23 36	14 58	11 9	18 39	13 48	10 10	15 45	10 45	8 12	13 42	7 116	5 60
131	24 0	15 0	11 11	18 42	13 51	10 11	15 48	10 48	8 14	13 45	7 118	5 61
132	24 4	15 4	11 13	18 45	13 54	10 12	15 51	10 51	8 16	13 48	7 120	5 62
133	24 8	15 7	11 15	18 48	13 57	10 13	15 54	10 54	8 18	13 51	7 122	5 63
134	24 12	15 10	11 17	18 51	14 0	10 14	15 57	10 57	8 20	13 54	7 124	5 64
135	24 16	15 13	11 19	18 54	14 3	10 15	16 0	11 0	8 22	13 57	7 126	5 65
136	24 20	15 16	11 21	18 57	14 6	10 16	16 3	11 3	8 24	14 0	7 128	5 66
137	24 24	15 19	11 23	19 0	14 9	10 17	16 6	11 6	8 26	14 3	7 130	5 67
138	24 28	15 22	11 25	19 3	14 12	10 18	16 9	11 9	8 28	14 6	7 132	5 68
139	24 32	15 25	11 27	19 6	14 15	10 19	16 12	11 12	8 30	14 9	7 134	5 69
140	24 36	15 28	11 29	19 9	14 18	10 20	16 15	11 15	8 32	14 12	7 136	5 70
141	25 0	15 31	11 31	19 12	14 21	10 21	16 18	11 18	8 34	14 15	7 138	5 71
142	25 4	15 34	11 33	19 15	14 24	10 22	16 21	11 21	8 36	14 18	7 140	5 72
143	25 8	15 37	11 35	19 18	14 27	10 23	16 24	11 24	8 38	14 21	7 142	5 73
144	25 12	15 40	11 37	19 21	14 30	10 24	16 27	11 27	8 40	14 24	7 144	5 74
145	25 16	15 43	11 39	19 24	14 33	10 25	16 30	11 30	8 42	14 27	7 146	5 75
146	25 20	15 46	11 41	19 27	14 36	10 26	16 33	11 33	8 44	14 30	7 148	5 76
147	25 24	15 49	11 43	19 30	14 39	10 27	16 36	11 36	8 46	14 33	7 150	5 77
148	25 28	15 52	11 45	19 33	14 42	10 28	16 39	11 39	8 48	14 36	7 152	5 78
149	25 32	15 55	11 47	19 36	14 45	10 29	16 42	11 42	8 50	14 39	7 154	5 79
150	25 36	15 58	11 49	19 39	14 48	10 30	16 45	11 45	8 52	14 42	7 156	5 80

TRADERS' TICKETS.

Scale—continued—141 Miles up to 200 Miles.

DISTANCE.	Traffic of £250 per annum.			Traffic of £300 per annum.			Traffic of £750 per annum.			Traffic of £1,000 per annum.		
Miles.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
141	4 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4	5 4
142	38 4	39 1	22 0	38 11	37 4	19 10	38 2	34 13	17 10	30 16	22 10	15 10
143	38 8	39 1	22 0	38 11	37 4	19 10	38 2	34 13	17 10	30 16	22 10	15 10
144	38 12	39 4	22 7	38 14	37 6	19 14	38 6	34 17	17 13	31 2	22 13	15 13
145	38 16	39 7	22 9	38 18	37 9	19 18	38 10	34 20	17 15	31 5	22 15	15 15
146	39 0	39 10	22 11	38 22	37 12	19 22	38 14	34 24	17 17	31 8	22 17	15 17
147	39 4	39 13	22 14	38 26	37 15	19 26	38 18	34 28	17 19	31 11	22 19	15 19
148	39 8	39 16	22 16	38 30	37 17	19 30	38 22	34 32	17 21	31 14	22 21	15 21
149	39 12	39 19	22 18	38 34	37 19	19 34	38 26	34 36	17 23	31 17	22 23	15 23
150	39 16	31 2	23 0	38 38	37 21	19 38	38 30	34 40	17 25	31 20	22 25	15 25
151	40 0	31 5	23 3	37 1	38 0	20 0	38 34	34 43	17 27	31 23	22 27	15 27
152	40 4	31 8	23 5	37 4	38 3	20 3	38 38	34 47	17 29	31 26	22 29	15 29
153	40 8	31 11	23 7	37 7	38 6	20 6	38 42	34 51	17 31	31 29	22 31	15 31
154	40 12	31 14	23 9	37 10	38 9	20 9	38 46	34 55	17 33	31 32	22 33	15 33
155	40 16	31 17	23 12	37 13	38 12	20 12	38 50	34 59	17 35	31 35	22 35	15 35
156	40 20	31 20	23 14	37 16	38 15	20 15	38 54	35 03	17 37	31 38	22 37	15 37
157	40 24	31 23	23 16	37 19	38 18	20 18	38 58	35 07	17 39	31 41	22 39	15 39
158	40 28	31 26	23 18	37 22	38 21	20 21	39 02	35 11	17 41	31 44	22 41	15 41
159	40 32	31 29	23 20	37 25	38 24	20 24	39 06	35 15	17 43	31 47	22 43	15 43
160	40 36	31 32	23 22	37 28	38 27	20 27	39 10	35 19	17 45	31 50	22 45	15 45
161	40 40	31 35	23 24	37 31	38 30	20 30	39 14	35 23	17 47	31 53	22 47	15 47
162	40 44	31 38	23 26	37 34	38 33	20 33	39 18	35 27	17 49	31 56	22 49	15 49
163	40 48	31 41	23 28	37 37	38 36	20 36	39 22	35 31	17 51	31 59	22 51	15 51
164	40 52	31 44	23 30	37 40	38 39	20 39	39 26	35 35	17 53	32 02	22 53	15 53
165	40 56	31 47	23 32	37 43	38 42	20 42	39 30	35 39	17 55	32 05	22 55	15 55
166	41 00	31 50	23 34	37 46	38 45	20 45	39 34	35 43	17 57	32 08	22 57	15 57
167	41 04	31 53	23 36	37 49	38 48	20 48	39 38	35 47	17 59	32 11	22 59	15 59
168	41 08	31 56	23 38	37 52	38 51	20 51	39 42	35 51	18 01	32 14	23 01	16 01
169	41 12	31 59	23 40	37 55	38 54	20 54	39 46	35 55	18 03	32 17	23 03	16 03
170	41 16	32 02	23 42	37 58	38 57	20 57	39 50	35 59	18 05	32 20	23 05	16 05
171	41 20	32 05	23 44	38 01	39 00	21 00	39 54	36 03	18 07	32 23	23 07	16 07
172	41 24	32 08	23 46	38 04	39 03	21 03	39 58	36 07	18 09	32 26	23 09	16 09
173	41 28	32 11	23 48	38 07	39 06	21 06	40 02	36 11	18 11	32 29	23 11	16 11
174	41 32	32 14	23 50	38 10	39 09	21 09	40 06	36 15	18 13	32 32	23 13	16 13
175	41 36	32 17	23 52	38 13	39 12	21 12	40 10	36 19	18 15	32 35	23 15	16 15
176	41 40	32 20	23 54	38 16	39 15	21 15	40 14	36 23	18 17	32 38	23 17	16 17
177	41 44	32 23	23 56	38 19	39 18	21 18	40 18	36 27	18 19	32 41	23 19	16 19
178	41 48	32 26	23 58	38 22	39 21	21 21	40 22	36 31	18 21	32 44	23 21	16 21
179	41 52	32 29	24 00	38 25	39 24	21 24	40 26	36 35	18 23	32 47	23 23	16 23
180	41 56	32 32	24 02	38 28	39 27	21 27	40 30	36 39	18 25	32 50	23 25	16 25
181	42 00	32 35	24 04	38 31	39 30	21 30	40 34	36 43	18 27	32 53	23 27	16 27
182	42 04	32 38	24 06	38 34	39 33	21 33	40 38	36 47	18 29	32 56	23 29	16 29
183	42 08	32 41	24 08	38 37	39 36	21 36	40 42	36 51	18 31	32 59	23 31	16 31
184	42 12	32 44	24 10	38 40	39 39	21 39	40 46	36 55	18 33	33 02	23 33	16 33
185	42 16	32 47	24 12	38 43	39 42	21 42	40 50	36 59	18 35	33 05	23 35	16 35
186	42 20	32 50	24 14	38 46	39 45	21 45	40 54	37 03	18 37	33 08	23 37	16 37
187	42 24	32 53	24 16	38 49	39 48	21 48	40 58	37 07	18 39	33 11	23 39	16 39
188	42 28	32 56	24 18	38 52	39 51	21 51	41 02	37 11	18 41	33 14	23 41	16 41
189	42 32	32 59	24 20	38 55	39 54	21 54	41 06	37 15	18 43	33 17	23 43	16 43
190	42 36	33 02	24 22	38 58	39 57	21 57	41 10	37 19	18 45	33 20	23 45	16 45
191	42 40	33 05	24 24	39 01	39 60	22 00	41 14	37 23	18 47	33 23	23 47	16 47
192	42 44	33 08	24 26	39 04	39 63	22 03	41 18	37 27	18 49	33 26	23 49	16 49
193	42 48	33 11	24 28	39 07	39 66	22 06	41 22	37 31	18 51	33 29	23 51	16 51
194	42 52	33 14	24 30	39 10	39 69	22 09	41 26	37 35	18 53	33 32	23 53	16 53
195	42 56	33 17	24 32	39 13	39 72	22 12	41 30	37 39	18 55	33 35	23 55	16 55
196	43 00	33 20	24 34	39 16	39 75	22 15	41 34	37 43	18 57	33 38	23 57	16 57
197	43 04	33 23	24 36	39 19	39 78	22 18	41 38	37 47	18 59	33 41	23 59	16 59
198	43 08	33 26	24 38	39 22	39 81	22 21	41 42	37 51	19 01	33 44	24 01	17 01
199	43 12	33 29	24 40	39 25	39 84	22 24	41 46	37 55	19 03	33 47	24 03	17 03
200	43 16	33 32	24 42	39 28	39 87	22 27	41 50	37 59	19 05	33 50	24 05	17 05
201	43 20	33 35	24 44	39 31	39 90	22 30	41 54	38 03	19 07	33 53	24 07	17 07
202	43 24	33 38	24 46	39 34	39 93	22 33	41 58	38 07	19 09	33 56	24 09	17 09
203	43 28	33 41	24 48	39 37	39 96	22 36	42 02	38 11	19 11	33 59	24 11	17 11
204	43 32	33 44	24 50	39 40	39 99	22 39	42 06	38 15	19 13	34 02	24 13	17 13
205	43 36	33 47	24 52	39 43	40 02	22 42	42 10	38 19	19 15	34 05	24 15	17 15
206	43 40	33 50	24 54	39 46	40 05	22 45	42 14	38 23	19 17	34 08	24 17	17 17
207	43 44	33 53	24 56	39 49	40 08	22 48	42 18	38 27	19 19	34 11	24 19	17 19
208	43 48	33 56	24 58	39 52	40 11	22 51	42 22	38 31	19 21	34 14	24 21	17 21
209	43 52	33 59	25 00	39 55	40 14	22 54	42 26	38 35	19 23	34 17	24 23	17 23
210	43 56	34 02	25 02	39 58	40 17	22 57	42 30	38 39	19 25	34 20	24 25	17 25
211	44 00	34 05	25 04	40 01	40 20	23 00	42 34	38 43	19 27	34 23	24 27	17 27
212	44 04	34 08	25 06	40 04	40 23	23 03	42 38	38 47	19 29	34 26	24 29	17 29
213	44 08	34 11	25 08	40 07	40 26	23 06	42 42	38 51	19 31	34 29	24 31	17 31
214	44 12	34 14	25 10	40 10	40 29	23 09	42 46	38 55	19 33	34 32	24 33	17 33
215	44 16	34 17	25 12	40 13	40 32	23 12	42 50	38 59	19 35	34 35	24 35	17 35
216	44 20	34 20	25 14	40 16	40 35	23 15	42 54	39 03	19 37	34 38	24 37	17 37
217	44 24	34 23	25 16	40 19	40 38	23 18	42 58	39 07	19 39	34 41	24 39	17 39
218	44 28	34 26	25 18	40 22	40 41	23 21	43 02	39 11	19 41	34 44	24 41	17 41
219	44 32	34 29	25 20	40 25	40 44	23 24	43 06	39 15	19 43	34 47	24 43	17 43
220	44 36	34 32	25 22	40 28	40 47	23 27	43 10	39 19	19 45	34 50	24 45	17 45
221	44 40	34 35	25 24	40 31	40 50	23 30	43 14	39 23	19 47	34 53	24 47	17 47
222	44 44	34 38	25 26	40 34	40 53	23 33	43 18	39 27	19 49	34 56	24 49	17 49
223	44 48	34 41	25 28	40 37	40 56	23 36	43 22	39 31	19 51	34 59	24 51	17 51
224	44 52	34 44	25 30	40 40	40 59	23 39	43 26	39 35	19 53	35 02	24 53	17 53
225	44 56	34 47	25 32	40 43	41 02	23 42	43 30	39 39	19 55	35 05	24 55	17 55
226	45 00	34 50	25 34	40 46	41 05	23 45	43 34	39 43	19 57	35 08	24 57	17 57
227	45 04	34 53	25 36	40 49	41 08	23 48	43 38	39 47	19 59	35 11	24 59	17 59
228	45 08	34 56	25 38	40 52	41 11	23 51	43 42	39 51	20 01	35 14	25 01	18 01
229	45 12	34 59	25 40	40 55	41 14	23 54	43 46	39 55	20 03	35 17	25 03	18 03
230	45 16	35 02	25 42	40 58	41 17							

TRADE'S TICKETS.

SCALES—continued—141 miles up to 200 miles.

Distance.	Traffic of £2,000 per annum.			Traffic of £3,000 per annum.			Traffic of £4,000 per annum.			Traffic of £5,000 per annum.		
	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
Miles.												
141	26 4	19 3	13 3	22 5	14 5	11 3	18 19	13 16	9 19	16 2	11 19	8 2
142	26 7	19 5	13 4	22 8	14 7	11 4	19 1	13 18	9 19	16 4	11 19	8 2
143	26 10	19 7	13 5	22 10	14 9	11 5	19 3	14 0	9 19	16 5	11 19	8 3
144	26 12	19 9	13 6	22 12	14 10	11 7	19 5	14 1	9 19	16 7	11 19	8 4
145	26 15	19 11	13 8	22 15	14 12	11 8	19 7	14 3	9 19	16 9	11 19	8 5
146	26 18	19 13	13 9	22 17	14 14	11 9	19 9	14 4	9 19	16 10	11 19	8 6
147	27 1	19 14	13 11	23 0	14 15	11 10	19 11	14 5	9 19	16 12	11 19	8 7
148	27 3	19 16	13 12	23 2	14 17	11 11	19 13	14 6	9 19	16 14	11 19	8 7
149	27 6	19 18	13 14	23 4	14 18	11 13	19 15	14 7	9 19	16 15	11 19	8 8
150	27 9	19 20	13 15	23 7	14 20	11 14	19 17	14 9	9 19	16 17	11 19	8 9
151	27 12	19 22	13 16	23 9	14 22	11 15	19 19	14 11	9 19	16 19	11 19	8 10
152	27 14	19 24	13 17	23 11	14 23	11 16	19 21	14 12	9 19	16 20	11 19	8 10
153	27 17	19 26	13 19	23 13	14 25	11 17	19 23	14 14	9 19	16 22	11 19	8 11
154	28 0	19 28	13 20	23 16	14 27	11 18	19 26	14 15	9 19	16 24	11 19	8 12
155	28 3	19 30	13 21	23 19	14 29	11 19	19 28	14 17	9 19	16 26	11 19	8 13
156	28 6	19 32	13 22	23 21	14 31	11 20	19 30	14 19	9 19	16 28	11 19	8 14
157	28 9	19 34	13 23	23 24	14 33	11 21	19 33	14 21	9 19	16 30	11 19	8 15
158	28 11	19 36	13 24	23 26	14 35	11 22	19 35	14 23	9 19	16 32	11 19	8 16
159	28 14	19 38	13 25	23 29	14 37	11 23	19 38	14 25	9 19	16 34	11 19	8 17
160	28 16	19 40	13 26	23 31	14 39	11 24	19 40	14 27	9 19	16 36	11 19	8 17
161	28 19	19 42	13 27	23 34	14 41	11 25	19 43	14 29	9 19	16 38	11 19	8 18
162	28 21	19 44	13 28	23 36	14 43	11 26	19 45	14 31	9 19	16 40	11 19	8 19
163	28 24	19 46	13 29	23 39	14 45	11 27	19 48	14 33	9 19	16 42	11 19	8 19
164	28 27	19 48	13 30	23 41	14 47	11 28	19 50	14 35	9 19	16 44	11 19	8 20
165	28 30	19 50	13 31	23 44	14 49	11 29	19 53	14 37	9 19	16 46	11 19	8 21
166	28 33	19 52	13 32	23 46	14 51	11 30	19 55	14 39	9 19	16 48	11 19	8 22
167	28 36	19 54	13 33	23 49	14 53	11 31	19 58	14 41	9 19	16 50	11 19	8 23
168	28 39	19 56	13 34	23 51	14 55	11 32	20 0	14 43	9 19	16 52	11 19	8 24
169	28 41	19 58	13 35	23 54	14 57	11 33	20 3	14 45	9 19	16 54	11 19	8 25
170	28 44	19 60	13 36	23 56	14 59	11 34	20 5	14 47	9 19	16 56	11 19	8 26
171	28 47	19 62	13 37	23 59	15 01	11 35	20 8	14 49	9 19	16 58	11 19	8 27
172	28 50	19 64	13 38	24 0	15 03	11 36	20 10	14 51	9 19	17 0	11 19	8 28
173	28 53	19 66	13 39	24 3	15 05	11 37	20 13	14 53	9 19	17 3	11 19	8 29
174	28 56	19 68	13 40	24 6	15 07	11 38	20 15	14 55	9 19	17 5	11 19	8 30
175	28 59	19 70	13 41	24 9	15 09	11 39	20 18	14 57	9 19	17 8	11 19	8 31
176	29 02	19 72	13 42	24 12	15 11	11 40	20 20	14 59	9 19	17 10	11 19	8 32
177	29 05	19 74	13 43	24 15	15 13	11 41	20 23	15 01	9 19	17 13	11 19	8 33
178	29 08	19 76	13 44	24 18	15 15	11 42	20 25	15 03	9 19	17 15	11 19	8 34
179	29 11	19 78	13 45	24 21	15 17	11 43	20 28	15 05	9 19	17 18	11 19	8 35
180	29 14	19 80	13 46	24 24	15 19	11 44	20 30	15 07	9 19	17 20	11 19	8 36
181	29 17	19 82	13 47	24 27	15 21	11 45	20 33	15 09	9 19	17 23	11 19	8 37
182	29 20	19 84	13 48	24 30	15 23	11 46	20 35	15 11	9 19	17 25	11 19	8 38
183	29 23	19 86	13 49	24 33	15 25	11 47	20 38	15 13	9 19	17 28	11 19	8 39
184	29 26	19 88	13 50	24 36	15 27	11 48	20 40	15 15	9 19	17 30	11 19	8 40
185	29 29	19 90	13 51	24 39	15 29	11 49	20 43	15 17	9 19	17 33	11 19	8 41
186	29 32	19 92	13 52	24 42	15 31	11 50	20 45	15 19	9 19	17 35	11 19	8 42
187	29 35	19 94	13 53	24 45	15 33	11 51	20 48	15 21	9 19	17 38	11 19	8 43
188	29 38	19 96	13 54	24 48	15 35	11 52	20 50	15 23	9 19	17 40	11 19	8 44
189	29 41	19 98	13 55	24 51	15 37	11 53	20 53	15 25	9 19	17 43	11 19	8 45
190	29 44	19 100	13 56	24 54	15 39	11 54	20 55	15 27	9 19	17 45	11 19	8 46
191	29 47	19 102	13 57	24 57	15 41	11 55	20 58	15 29	9 19	17 48	11 19	8 47
192	29 50	19 104	13 58	25 0	15 43	11 56	21 0	15 31	9 19	17 50	11 19	8 48
193	29 53	19 106	13 59	25 3	15 45	11 57	21 3	15 33	9 19	17 53	11 19	8 49
194	29 56	19 108	14 00	25 6	15 47	11 58	21 5	15 35	9 19	17 55	11 19	8 50
195	29 59	19 110	14 01	25 9	15 49	11 59	21 8	15 37	9 19	17 58	11 19	8 51
196	30 02	19 112	14 02	25 12	15 51	12 0	21 10	15 39	9 19	18 0	11 19	8 52
197	30 05	19 114	14 03	25 15	15 53	12 1	21 13	15 41	9 19	18 3	11 19	8 53
198	30 08	19 116	14 04	25 18	15 55	12 2	21 15	15 43	9 19	18 5	11 19	8 54
199	30 11	19 118	14 05	25 21	15 57	12 3	21 18	15 45	9 19	18 8	11 19	8 55
200	30 14	19 120	14 06	25 24	15 59	12 4	21 20	15 47	9 19	18 10	11 19	8 56
201 and onwards add for each mile	1/11	1/8	3d.	1/8	1/1	6d.	1/8	1/4	8d.	1/8	3d.	6d.

APPENDIX No. 23.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT transmitted by Mr. JEREMIAH MURPHY, Clonkeen, Co. Kerry, who gave evidence before the Commission on the 22nd October, 1907.

COOMACULLIN,
CLONKEEN, Co. KERRY,
December 1914, 1907.

My evidence, it is necessary to explain that 1d. is paid to the carriers for conveyance from the Butter Exchange to the railway station, so that the net charge of the railway company is 4d.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) JAMES MURPHY.

G. E. SHANAHAN, Esq.,

Secretary,

Vice-regal Commission on Irish Railways,
Dublin.

SIR,—I enclose herewith Delivery Notes showing the freight charge on 50 lb. boxes of butter from Lookridge to Cork.

The charge on the 56 lb. box referred to in my evidence has been reduced from 1s. 3d. to 3d., the reduced charge being in operation before the date of my examination.

I also enclose Debit Note, showing the company's charge for the return of empty boxes from Cork to Lookridge. Of the total charge of 5d. referred to in

COPIES OF DELIVERY NOTES.

61.

M. Walsh.

Dr.

To the Great Southern and Western Railway Company.

For Consignment of Goods as under—

Goods Dept., Cork.
7 Dec., 1907.
G. S. & W. Ry.

Station from	Sender	Number of Articles	Description of Goods and Marks	Total
L. Bridge, ...	W. Murphy, ...	1	Box.	£ s d 0 0 4

61.

M. Walsh.

Goods Dept., Cork.
7 Dec., 1907.
G. S. & W. Ry.

Station from	Sender	Number of Articles	Description of Goods and Marks	Total
L. Bridge, ...	A. Connell, ...	1	Box.	£ s d 0 0 4

Messrs E. Walsh & Sons.

Address
R. H. Cusack, Agent

Goods Department, Cork Station
7 day of 12, 1907.

Dr. To the Great Southern and Western Railway Company:

Station	Name	Number of Articles	Description of Goods and Marks	Weight	Total
Baltimore	J. P. Kitchin	1	R. H. Box.	Lbs.	£ s d
Baltimore	Lacey	1	do.	7	0 0 3
Baltimore	Randall	1	do.	7	0 0 3
Newmarket	Murphy	1	do.	7	0 0 3
Baltimore	O'Leary	1	do.	7	0 0 3
Millbrook	Cornell	1	do.	7	0 0 3
Lookridge	O'Connell	1	do.	7	0 0 3
Lookridge	Murphy	1	do.	7	0 0 4
Baltimore	D. Cusack	1	do.	7	0 0 4
Charmott	Lytelton	1	do.	7	0 0 4
Kilkee	E. Murray	1	do.	7	0 0 4
Caslo	J. McQuay	1	do.	7	0 0 4
				Forwarded,	£ s 10.

APPENDIX No. 24.

STATEMENT as to Passenger Fares for Cattle Dealers, transmitted by Mr. W. O'SULLIVAN, Merchant Abbeyfeale, on the 22nd October, 1907.

SPRING MOUNT,
ASHFIELD,
October 23rd, 1907

To the Secretary,
Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,
Dublin.

DEAR SIR,—I will thank you to lay the enclosed statement before your Commission.

Yours etc.,
(Signed) W. O'SULLIVAN

IRISH RAILWAY RATES.

There are hundreds of Cattle Dealers who never ship any cattle out of this country—they buy in Man-

ster and sell in Limerick and Corkswight—who pay no freight for cattle to the railway companies £200 or £300 a year, at least, each, and who never get one pin's point encouragement from the railways. I am one of these myself. I applied last April, and several times before, for return tickets at single fares for myself and son, when I intend to bring up at the business, and was refused. I pointed out to them that it would be a great encouragement, and I thought the companies would gain by it, as they could see from their own books that the fairs held on Mondays were better attended than those held on any other day in the week—a fact which I attribute to week-end tickets. I am certain the companies would gain by giving return tickets at single fares to all Cattle Dealers who pay £100 a year freight for cattle.

APPENDIX No. 25.

COMPLAINT by Messrs. Murphy Bros., Waterford, as to the insufficiency of wagons at Waterford.

(Copies of three letters addressed to the Vice-Royal Commission by Messrs. Murphy Bros. and the Manager of the Great Southern and Western Railway.)

I.

(Circular Letter).

Murphy Brothers, Ltd.,
Coal Importers, Steamship Owners,
Waterford and Limerick.

WATERFORD,
24 November, 1907.

DEAR SIR,—We regret the great delays that have lately occurred in the execution of orders, and a considerable portion of this delay is attributable to the G.S. and W. Railway being unable to supply the necessary trucks for our requirements. This is detrimental to the advancement of our inland industries and to the ports they serve, and should be taken up, not only by traders, but by the representatives in Parliament and County Councils. We have offered to supplement their supply with wagons of our own, and have actually got the wagons, but they won't allow them to run—must won't SUPPLY THEMSELVES, AND WON'T ALLOW EVEN THE TRADERS TO SUPPLY.

The following cargoes are now due:—

Best "Walland" Orrell coals, to-morrow, 22s.
Best "Queen" Orrell coals, discharging, 20s.
Best "Hibernia" House and Steam, Monday, 18s.
Best Wigan coals, to-morrow, 18s. 6d.
Best large Newport coals, end next week, 18s.
Best superior large Scotch, Friday next, 18s. per ton, ex ship less.

Orders entrusted to us are now receiving special attention, and you can rely on the quality of our coal.

Prices are somewhat easier, but collieries are not offering ahead at reduced rates.

We solicit your orders; and inquiries promptly attended.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) MURPHY BROS., Ltd.

II.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

TRADING MANAGER'S OFFICE, DUBLIN,
November 15th, 1907.

T. M. 13235.

SIR,—Replying to your letter of the 14th inst. (No. 2474-07), with extract from letter addressed to the Commission in regard to the supply of wagons.

These firms (Messrs. Murphy Brothers, Limited, Waterford) has bought some wagons for its coal traffic without making any arrangements beforehand with the company, but they have not procured enough for carrying on their business, and have made no provision of aiding accommodation to stand them on when not in use.

A question is at issue which it will be necessary to submit to the Court of the Railway and Canal Commission for decision, and they have stated their intention of invoking the intervention of that Court.

There has not been any unreasonable shortage of wagons on the part of this company.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) R. A. NEASE.

J. E. SHANAHAN, Esq.,
Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,
Dublin.

III.

Murphy Bros.,
Steamship Owners, Coal and Salt Merchants.

WATERFORD,
2nd December, '07.

The Secretary,
Railway Commission, Dublin.

SIR,—We are in receipt of your 22nd-07, dated 27th ult., with copy of G.S. and W. Railway Company's letter of 16th ult.

We, as well as other traders here, have suffered considerable losses through detention of steamers owing to the insufficiency of trucks to take their coal cargoes.

In most cases we are unable to procure half enough wagons for the tonnage we require on rails unless we keep our steamers lying here for two or three days. As an instance of this our s.s. "Benmore" arrived here at 4 p.m. Sunday last, 24th ult., with 450 tons of coal for customers on the U.S. and W. Railway (due notice being given of our requirements for trucks). The steamer commenced discharge at our wharf at midnight, Sunday, when only twelve wagons were supplied. These were loaded by 8.30 a.m. Monday, and steamer had to remain idle from that hour until 9 a.m., when eleven trucks more were given, these were loaded by 1 p.m., and steamer was again left idle until 7 p.m., when twelve wagons more were supplied; and so on at intervals until 7 p.m., 26th ult., when we succeeded in getting our steamer away. Our steamer was consequently forty-three hours discharging 380 tons coal, or little over 6½ tons per hour, a fact which a few schoolboys would accomplish in a shorter time.

This tonnage could be easily discharged from the steamer and loaded into trucks, if trucks were available in six or eight hours, or to give ample time, we shall say ten hours. The trucks were not available. Railway company could not supply them. We had to wait their pleasure and convenience to give them, and detain steamer in order to supply our customers, with the result that we lost thirty-three hours of our steamer's time, which, when calculated at the usual charge for demurrage of ten shillings per hour, spells a dead loss to us of £115 15s. We could give many similar instances of detention and loss, we can also prove where not a single wagon was supplied for other cargoes, and quite recently this company refused to supply any wagons for 600 tons coal which we had previously ordered.

This is a slight description of the way we have been treated for years, we complained, but no relief was given. Matters gradually became worse until we at last advised railway company that if they did not supply sufficient trucks we would be obliged to get some ourselves. We asked them to quote rates for coal in owner's trucks, and they quoted rates that would not pay any owner to run them (2d per ton under existing rates for any distance). We waited patiently for a time, expecting improved supplies, but instead of any improvement matters became much worse. Forty miles of extension railway was opened in July, 1906, to Wexford and Rosslare, for which no additional rolling stock was provided, with the result that we had the pleasure of seeing our steamers further detained, in order to supply the need of this new service. The trucks that should in the ordinary course be given to our boats were sent

by special train to Wexford and Rosslare. We were therefore left idle, and to suffer detention and consequent loss while this company was meeting the requirements of this new section of railway. We remonstrated, but the officials here had no excuse to offer. They stated they were obliged to supply the demands of this new railway in preference to Waterford, and they did so under orders from Kingsbridge.

Therefore, seeing matters going from bad to worse, we were obliged to procure some wagons of our own, thirty-five, to supplement those supplied by railway company. We ordered them, and advised railway company that we had done so. Our wagons arrived here during the early part of last month (November). Railway company had due notice of their coming and arrival. We loaded them and consigned them in the ordinary course, but the company refused to take them, saying we had no working arrangement with them, nor had we siding accommodation to stand them on when idle. Well, we need no working arrangement for them, as the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, supplies the regulations by which they shall be worked. Then, as to siding accommodation, we don't need such as long as we keep them working. But the fact is we have ample accommodation for the number ordered should we need it. Now the company say they are agreeable to work our trucks on conditions that from the date we commence to use our own we shall not ask them to provide any of theirs; or, in other words, if we provide any we must provide all we require. We would require over 100 trucks for our business, and because we provide one-third of this number to supplement the railway stock, they say if you are going to work your own wagons you must supply sufficient for your trade, as we refuse to give you any of ours. They won't provide themselves or allow anyone else to supply them; this is the present position. Our steamers are detained and our trucks idle, and we wait to be allowed to load them when the company fail to supply them.

We take exception to the company's refusal to supply us with trucks for Class "A" traffic when they supply them to all other traders; their action we consider unreasonable and illegal. We placed the facts before the Board of Trade, but that Board says they have no power to deal with the legal point we raise. We, therefore, have no option but to appeal to the Railway Commission to decide the point between us, and this we shall do at the earliest opportunity.

Your obedient servants,

For Murphy Bros., Ltd.,

(Signed) MICHAEL MURPHY,
Managing Director.

APPENDIX No. 26.

STATEMENT on the subject of the PARSONSTOWN AND PORTUMNA RAILWAY furnished by the Public Works Loan Commissioners, England, as supplementary to the evidence of Mr. R. PHILPOT, their Secretary, in London, on the 8th November, 1907.

The primary and only statutory duty of the Loan Commissioners in connection with loans which they have made is to get their money back. Not only have they no legal power to make a present of their security, but it would be inconsistent with their public duty to do so. In all their dealings with the Parsonstown Railway the Commissioners were actuated by this consideration. To have accepted the proposal of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to take the line as a gift would have meant to sacrifice not only their own claim (amounting at that time, with reserves of interest, to about £18,000), but those of other creditors. Moreover, whether rightly or wrongly, the Commissioners fully believed that the Great Southern Company had deliberately starved the line with a view of obtaining it for much

below its value. Assuming the company to have lost £20,000 on the ten years working (which is probably considerably over the mark), it would make with the £12,000 subscribed for capital, the total outlay of the company, £32,000, for which sum, if their offer to the Loan Commissioners had been accepted, they would have acquired a line which cost over £80,000 to construct. The opinion of the Commissioners as to the mode in which the line was worked and its possibilities was founded upon reports by three engineers of standing, and the statements of residents in the neighbourhood.

During the time they were in possession the Commissioners made every possible effort to secure the line being opened and worked for the advantage of

the public, which they were advised might be done independently of the Great Southern Company, and they believe that but for the acute political situation which prevailed just at that time, and the consequent disturbed state of the country in general, and this district in particular, they would have succeeded. In withdrawing from possession in 1883, they, it need be hardly said, did not for a moment foresee the spoliation of the line which subsequently took place, and thought they would have been able at any moment to resume possession under their statutory powers with a view to carrying out any arrangements which might have been come to for reopening the line.

In connection with the questions (34062 to 34067) put by Colonel Hutchinson P.O. as to whether the Loan Commissioners had any and what control over the application of their loans when advanced, it should be explained that, although the Commissioners have no engineering expert on their staff qualified to supervise this, they invariably take such measures as are open to them and prescribed by their Acts of

Parliament to ensure the proper application of their loans. In the present case the Commissioners satisfied themselves that a contract had been entered into for the completion of the works by a substantial contractor; they stipulated that their loan should be advanced in two equal instalments, the advance of the second to be subject to the production of evidence of the expenditure both of the first instalment, and of a like sum to be raised by the company, and in connection with each instalment they took (in addition to comments in the mortgage) a personal bond from the Marquis of Eglarsham, the Chairman of the Parnassian Company, for the entire completion of the undertaking, and the production of evidence of the application of the money towards such completion.

Public Works Loan Board,
Old Jersey, London, E.C.,
25th November, 1907.

APPENDIX No. 27.

STATEMENT transmitted by Mr. T. O'CONNOR, Secretary and General Manager, Cork and Muskerry Railway, in connection with the evidence as to a grant for improvement of the line, given by Sir George St John Colthurst, Bart., B.L., Vice-Chairman of the Company, on the 15th November, 1907.

CORK AND MUSKERRY RAILWAY.

General Manager's Office,

Cork, 24th February, 1908.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to the evidence given by Sir George Colthurst, Bart., before the Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways on the 15th November last, the following may be of interest to your Commission and which, to my mind, is an additional argument in favour of a Treasury grant to this company to effect the very necessary improvements suggested by Sir George Colthurst.

Starting with the year 1899 (then being the first year the entire line was open for traffic), the Treasury guaranteed two-fifths of the Interest on Guaranteed Capital, which for this year would be £1,435 and for the following 12 years up to and ending 31st December last, at rate of £1,500

The amount the Treasury has been called on to pay is, £19,688

Balance in favour of Company, £2,867

As there are very few, if any, of the guaranteed Light Railways, built under the Act of 1883, certified any portion of the guarantee, I think this Company should get credit for the above, and I feel certain if the improvements suggested by Sir George Colthurst were carried out this Company would, in a very short time, pay the entire guarantee.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed), T. O'CONNOR

Geo. E. Shanahan, Esq.,
13, Stephen's-green, North,
Dublin.

per annum, £27,000
Total, £28,435

APPENDIX No. 28.

CORRESPONDENCE between the Secretary, Irish Cattle Traders' and Stockowners' Association, and the Commission as to transit complaints, etc., regarding Irish Railways.

I.

IRISH CATTLE TRADERS AND STOCKOWNERS' ASSOCIATION,

Offices—City Arms Hotel,

Prussia-street,

Dublin, 15th November, 1907

dence from this Association was given many further complaints regarding railways have been received. A list of these can be compiled if you think that same could be received as evidence.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed), LOUGHER G. SULLIVAN,
Secretary.

George E. Shanahan,
Secretary, Railway Commission,
13, Stephen's-green, North.

DEAR SIR,—I enclose you newspaper cutting of letter received from Mr. P. A. Durkin which my committee thinks should be brought under the notice of the Commission. I may add that since the evi-

Newspaper cutting referred to in Mr. L. G. Sherlock's letter of 16th November, 1907.

"Transport Complaints."

The Secretary was directed to bring the following letter under the notice of the Railway Commission, and to ask that further evidence dealing with complaints should be received:—

LIVERPOOL, October 21st, 1907.

SIR,—As the Railway Commission is still sitting it may not be out of place to bring to their notice the practice now in existence on the several Irish railways. From inland towns any less number of pags than 20 is charged through as 20. I enclose a freight note to illustrate. Ten pags cost 2s. 8d. per head from Castlereagh. This has occurred via Dromedary as well as via Dublin. On the last occasion the G.D.S.Co. met me in the matter entirely out of their own pocket, so the Irish railways refuse to budge an inch. The Dromedary Company, however, declined to do anything, and threatened to stop my pags when I wanted the matter left over for negotiation. There always has been in my experience a wagon rate, half wagon, and head rate, but here they assume the power to charge two pags as twenty.

Yours truly,

(Signed), P. A. DUNKIN.

A complaint from Mr. Webb, Ballyhaunis, was also dealt with, and the Secretary instructed.

The meeting adjourned.—Continued.

II.

VICEROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

13, St. Stephen's-green, North,
Dublin.

22nd November, 1907.

1896-07.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 16th instant, transmitting newspaper cutting containing a communication from Mr. P. A. Dunkin, and suggesting that evidence on behalf of your Association as to further complaints regarding railways should be received by the Commission, I am directed to inform

you that the list of witnesses was closed some time ago, and the final sitting, at which general evidence from the public will be taken, will be held in Dublin in January. The Commission will be glad to print the enclosure in your letter under reply in the Appendix to their next Report, and if you will be good enough to submit a list of further complaints a similar course will be adopted in connection therewith.

I am to add that if your Association are of opinion that the further particulars which you propose to furnish are of such importance as to require the personal testimony of a representative, the Commission will be glad to consider whether facilities can be given at their next sittings if, and when, a statement of the proposed additional evidence has been forwarded for their information.

I AM, SIR,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed), Geo. E. SHANAHAN,
Secretary.

LOURAN G. SHERLOCK, Esq.,

Secretary,

Irish Cattle Traders and Stockowners'

Association,

Summerhill, Dublin.

III.

IRISH CATTLE TRADERS AND STOCKOWNERS' ASSOCIATION.

Office—City Arms Hotel,

Prussia-street,

Dublin, 26th March, 1908.

SIR,—Referring to yours of the 25th instant, I have to say that I have not received any further instructions from my Committee as to forwarding particulars of complaints received since evidence was heard from this Association.

I AM, SIR,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed), LOURAN G. SHERLOCK

Secretary.

Geo. E. SHANAHAN, Esq.,

13, St. Stephen's-green, Nth.

APPENDIX No. 29.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT transmitted by the BOARD OF WORKS as to certain matters in connection with the TRALEE AND DINGLE LIGHT RAILWAY affecting that Department, referred to by Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL, B.L., M.P. (Chairman of the Committee of Management), during his examination on the 6th June, 1907.

18140—'07:

OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS,

DUBLIN, 26th January, 1908.

SIR,

I am directed by the Commissioners of Public Works to refer to your letter of the 16th ultimo, forwarding copy of evidence given by Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, M.P., before the Vice-Royal Commission, and inviting the Board's observations on the statements made therein, regarding the estimate made by them of the capital required in the case of the Tralee and Dingle Railway.

In reply, I am directed to inform you that the Board had two functions under the Act of 1883, (1) in accordance with the requirements of the earlier Tramways Acts, incorporated with the Act of 1883, to hold an inquiry and make a report extending only to the merits of the undertaking as an engineering point of view, and any modification of the same in

that respect which might advantageously be made. For the purposes of this inquiry the Board employed outside engineers, engaged for the time, who were the most experienced railway engineers they could obtain. The Tramways (Ireland) Amendment Act, 24 & 25 Vic., cap. 102, expressly excluded from this inquiry and thus report the financial arrangements made or proposed by the promoters, and the sufficiency of the estimate for the works, which, under the Tramways (Ireland) Act, 23 & 24 Vic., cap. 182, had been included as their scope. In the present case the inquiry was held in 1884, and the report made on the engineering merits, etc., of the line was furnished to the promoters, and had to be submitted to the Grand Jury before a presentment could be obtained.

(2) When the presentment had been obtained and an application was made for the Order in Council, it was the duty of the Commissioners to furnish an

estimate to the Lord Lieutenant, with the amount of paid-up capital necessary for the purposes of the undertaking. The object of this report was that His Excellency, after hearing any representations by the promoters, might fix a limit upon the amount of capital upon which dividends might be guaranteed by the Grand Jury. For the purpose of this report, the promoting company supplied information as to the quantities and nature of the work, whether rock or clay, &c. The accuracy of the quantities and the nature of the ground were checked by the engineer employed by the Board, from the plans and sections and descriptions furnished by the promoters. The quantities so arrived at were noted at what were considered to be proper figures, and upon those the estimate was based. It would appear that the object of Parliament in requiring an estimate to be furnished to the Lord Lieutenant was to avoid the danger, not, as assumed by Mr. O'Donnell in his evidence, of too small an expenditure being authorised, but of too large an amount of guaranteed capital being authorised in the Order in Council, the

excess of which would inure to the benefit of the promoters. It was naturally not the interest of the latter, especially where, as in this case, they were also practically the contractors of the line, to underestimate the quantities and the difficulties of the work. I am to add that the Alipore Commission on Public Works in 1887 considered that the Board's functions under these Acts were insufficient, and thereby were enlarged under the Railways Act of 1889, as explained by Mr. Commissioner Stevenson in his evidence on the 13th October, 1906 (Question No. 433).

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) H. WILLIAMS,

Secretary.

The Secretary,

Vice-Royal Commission on Irish Railways,
Dublin.

APPENDIX No. 30.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT transmitted by the BOARD OF WORKS as to certain matters in connection with the SCHULL AND SKIBBEREEN LIGHT RAILWAY affecting that Department, referred to by Messrs. EDWARD ROYCE, J.P., and RICHARD EVANS, C.E. (Chairman and Engineer respectively of the Railway), during their examination on the 12th November, 1907.

14872—'07:

OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS,
DUBLIN, 2nd January, 1908

Sir,

I am directed by the Commissioners of Public Works to refer to your letter of the 10th ultimo, inviting their observations on certain points in the evidence given by Messrs. Edward Royce, J.P., and Richard Evans, C.E., Chairman and Engineer, respectively, of the Schull and Skibbereen Light Railway, and I am to state as follows for the information of the Vice-Royal Commission on Irish Railways:—

Questions 25207 and 26903 and 26963.—It is stated that no supervision was exercised by the Board of Works during the construction of the line. This is quite true. The railway was built under the Tramways Act of 1863, and the Board had no power to exercise supervision over the works. Their functions were confined to reporting on the feasibility of the scheme from an engineering point of view as a preliminary to its being brought before the Grand Jury for their guarantee and before the Privy Council for the necessary Order in Council, and on the estimated amount of paid-up capital necessary for the purposes of the undertaking, for the information of the Lord Lieutenant. The Board's powers under the Act were explained to the Commission by Mr. Commissioner Stevenson in his evidence on the 13th October, 1906, and in the Board's Annual Report for 1895-96 handed in by him.

Questions 33835 &c.—It is stated that representations were made to the Board regarding the unsatisfactory working of the line, that the Board sent down their engineer in 1905, that no reply had been sent by the Board subsequent to his report, that they had acknowledged the letter sent by the Committee of Management, and that it seemed a case where the Board should have made some representations regarding the working. The facts are as follows:—

The Committee applied to the Irish Government in 1905 for a grant of £10,000 for the improvement of the line. His Excellency asked the Board for a report on the subject. The Board's engineer was directed to inspect the railway, and a report based on his was sent to the Under-Secretary on 2nd August, 1906. A printed statement of their case, addressed to the

Chief Secretary, was issued by the Committee on 30th August, 1906, and a copy was sent to the Board by them without any covering letter. It was received on 30th August, 1906. No communication other than this regarding the working appears to have been received from them.

As regards the Board making representations as to the working, it may be interesting to state that in connection with the investigation of the accounts of this railway, the Board, after much correspondence with the Committee, succeeded in inducing them to adopt the following improvements:—(1) A third train per day in 1901, (2) re-casting of the time-table so as to make connections with the Cork and Brandon trains in 1901, (3) arranging at through rates with Cork and Brandon stations in 1904, (4) the adoption, in 1900, of a new and improved classification of goods rates instead of the old and obsolete one in use. The Board have information showing that increased passenger and goods receipts resulted from the changes.

Questions 33880-83 and 33615. It is implied that the Board of Works is responsible for the design and construction of the line. The Board were not responsible for the design, as the plans were not prepared by them, but by the promoters. The statutory limit of their functions regarding construction has already been referred to. The Alipore Commission referred to the matter of Government supervision over works constructed by State aid. They reported its absence as one of the defects of the Act of 1863, and recommended (page 34) that it should be adopted on behalf of the Government and the district to ensure that the approved designs were thoroughly and efficiently carried out. Provision was made for it in the Act of 1889, and subsequent Acts.

Question No. 33962.—The question of making a grant of £10,000 is a matter for the Irish Government.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) H. WILLIAMS,

Secretary.

The Secretary,

Vice-Royal Commission on Irish Railways,
Dublin.

APPENDIX No. 31.

STATEMENT as to exorbitant charges on goods and breakages of Eggs (sent to the English Markets) by the Railway Companies, transmitted on 12th December, 1907, by Mr. W. D. POWER, Secretary, Rathkale Co-operative Poultry Society (Limited).

Poultry—There appears to be only through rates to any comparatively few centres in England and Wales, the result being that provincial centres are debarr'd from doing business outside those places to which through rates apply. Even at through rates, the rates are so high that Societies cannot trade without loss, as may be seen from the following few examples:—

1. On 31st October, 1906, a case of dead poultry containing 5 turkeys, 18 fowls, 2 ducks, 6 rabbits, in all 31 items, was sent from Rathkale to London. Gross weight, 1 cwt. 1 qr. Dead poultry rate, 110s. per ton—5s. 6d. per cwt. Charge collected from consignee at London, 12s. 7d., which works out at 8s. 6d. per cwt., or 22 10s. per ton, or 6d. per fowl.

2. Railway companies send round their agents offering the use of hampers to convey dead poultry, and on collecting carriage also collect here for those hampers, together with having sender to pay carriage.

On 14th November, 1906, a case of mixed poultry and game was sent from Rathkale to Birmingham—44 birds—gross weight, 2 cwt. 1 qr., actual weight of birds, exclusive of basket, 1 cwt. 3 qrs. 2 lbs. Tabulated rate to Birmingham, 65 per ton. Charge made and collected from consignee, 12s. 7d., or 28 15s. per ton, or on actual weight of goods, 250 lb. per ton. On the railway being sent they returned 8s. Several cases as above can be given.

3. On 18th December, sent one basket, containing 14 turkeys, weighing 127 lb., or 14½ lb. each. Gross weight, basket and poultry, 1 cwt. 2 qrs. To London, 25 10s. per ton, with hire of hamper. Rate charged, and paid by sender, 9s. 6d., which would be 28 per ton on the contents of basket, or 8½d. per lb.

We invariably find that fowls weighing from 2 lbs. to 4 lbs. cost 2½d. or 3½d. to deliver from here to even those few English markets to which, what is termed through rates, extend. Examples 1 and 2 are by no means exceptional, but they are such that the sender do not either deliver, or if so, being paid by consignee and deducted from their accounts, they have no remedy but silence, hence numbers of such occur. And in example 3, which is a transaction where the sender paid at his and (consequently securing the lowest possible rate), it can be seen it is exorbitant and cripples the Irish producer from competing with Continental producers, for it is said that the rate for poultry from New Zealand or Canada is something like 20s. per ton. A turkey same weight as mentioned above would only cost for carriage 2d., whereas the cost would be 8½d. from here to London.

Eggs

The complaints we continually receive from consignees in English markets are deplorable in reference to the breakages. To counteract, some merchants advise to send all eggs at ordinary or company's risk, but even in that way the well-disposed merchants towards Irish eggs have to discontinue purchases. For they say that even after a long wait and correspondence they are paid only for the number in each case broken, but the number soiled by these broken is much more, and they have to suffer loss. Eggs are delivered in London and other English markets from the Continental markets at about three pence per hundred, while from here it costs nine or ten pence per hundred, and statistics show that from the interior of Russia the rate per ton for eggs is 43 10s., while from here it is 43 10s. per ton.

Perhaps you may have an opportunity of glancing over this and possibly throwing some light on the matter.

I could give numerous other cases, but I think one of each class sufficient to show the evidence.

The Manager of the Great Southern and Western Railway having been communicated with by the Vice-regal Commission as to the above, furnished the following explanation on the 30th January, 1908:—

EXTRACT FROM LETTER DATED 30th JANUARY, 1908, FROM THE TRAFFIC MANAGER OF THE GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY.

"In regard to the first paragraph of the statement, we have exceptional rates in operation with all centres for which traffic offers, and any request for the arrangement of special rates has had our prompt attention. For example, during the past year exceptional rates were arranged for poultry between Rathkale and the following stations, viz., Blackpool, Blackstock, Northampton, Preston, and Southampton at the instance of the Rathkale Co-operative Poultry Society, Ltd."

"As to the consignment of the 31st October, which was forwarded by passenger train, we entered out the correct charge, viz., 6s. 11d., and the London and North Western Company stated that amount only was collected from consignee, and not 12s. 7d. as mentioned by Mr. Power. We were served by a Civil Bill by complaint for recovery of the alleged over-charge, and on taking up again with the London and North Western Company they asked us to pay the amount and settle the matter out of Court, which we did, and they would go into the matter again. That company consequently assumed that the correct charges were collected from consignee, and at the present moment we are endeavouring on behalf of that company to recover from sender the money paid out in error. You will not therefore that this company is in no way to blame in the matter."

"With regard to the consignment of 14th November, I find we also entered out this correctly, and according to sender's communication in this company dated 26th November, 1906, 12s. 7d. only was collected from consignee. I find that on the 17th November, 1906, however, a similar consignment was forwarded from this Society to same consignee, which is probably the one referred to, and in this case also we entered out the correct charge, viz., 5s. per cwt., but the way-bill appears to have got lost in transit, and the traffic having been received by the London and North Western Company mentioned they collected an assumed charge, which was subsequently refunded to complainant when the matter was brought under notice. It is not correct to state that they had to see for recovery of the amount. Here again this company was in no way to blame."

"In regard to the consignment sent forwarded on December 18th. We are unable to trace any entry on this date to correspond with the particulars given."

"As regards the supply of hampers to senders of fowl traffic. This company does not provide hampers, but they are supplied by some of the English companies, who make a charge for same, and which is collected in addition to the freight."

"Regarding the breakage of eggs in transit. This is a subject that has had a great deal of attention from the officials of this company, and every effort is made to minimize the risk of damage in transit. I may add that there is to be a Conference of railway managers in London next month to discuss this subject generally."

"I am personally of opinion that a large amount of the breakages of eggs complained of, and for which the carriers have to pay, is due to imperfect packing on the part of the senders, and since the latter adopted the practice of forwarding this traffic in non-returnable cases, the same regard is apparently not paid to the quality of the boxes used or the class of timber with which they are constructed, and they

appears to be satisfied. If the packages reach the railway companies in good condition, without any consideration for the many hardships they have to undergo in the ordinary course of transit to cross-Channel stations, and which entail a good deal of handling and require that the boxes should be of a substantial make.

"As to the point raised that the companies do not pay for soiled eggs as they do in the case of broken eggs, I may say that we seldom get claims for soiled eggs, and it is generally recognised that the amount received for salvage on the broken eggs covers any expense incurred in washing the soiled eggs."

The Commission communicated the above to Mr. Power, who replied as under on the 14th February, 1906—

NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE FOODS SOCIETY, LTD.,

The Square,

Railhead, 14th February, 1906.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to yours of 31st January I beg to say that I do not see any matter in the statement of the Manager of the G. S. & W. Rly. Co. to change any of the original statements I sent you, but if any of it is to strengthen mine. The few news referred to by the railway have been furnished with several others to the railway company on January 2nd, 1907, and a Civil Bill had to be issued after the railway company used all possible means by a flood of able correspondence to get out of their liability and ultimately had to refund us the money.

Having these two small matters so long under consideration it is strange they were not decided earlier. I am quite certain the overcharge has been made on these, but the fact of these surcharges being made in of frequent occasions, and from the able manner the officials of railways meet such claims by refusal, most people, rather than try to recover their rights, allow the matter to fall through. I may say that the same applies to claims for breakage of eggs, even though sent at company's or railway risk. As for protection we must send all our eggs at company's risk as we have no satisfaction at all if sent at owner's risk.

—In the general complaints I have made I think it only fair to say that the G. S. & W. Rly. is not meant, as our experience is that that company is very free from breakages and appear to us to be careful of the eggs while in their charge. The cross-Channel railways are the chief objects of our complaints.

With reference to first paragraph re special rate, that is so, and in many instances the difference between owner's risk and ordinary or company's risk is so great that there is practically no special rate. As above we cannot use the owner's risk rate.

Yours truly,

(Signed), W. D. Power,

Secretary.

Geo. B. Shannahan, Esq.,

Secretary,

Vigorous Commission on Irish Railways.

APPENDIX No. 32.

Resolution adopted by the Queenstown Urban District Council on the 4th October, 1907.

(COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE)

I.

QUEENSTOWN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

DUBLIN CASTLE,

TOWN HALL, QUEENSTOWN,

October 30th, 1907.

22837.

SIR,—I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a letter received from the Town Clerk of Queenstown on the subject of the suggested purchase of Irish Railways by the State.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) J. B. DOUGHERTY.

The Secretary,

Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,

13, St. Stephen's-green, North,

Dublin.

(Enclosure).

QUEENSTOWN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

TOWN HALL, QUEENSTOWN,

October 26th, 1907.

SIR,—I am directed to inform you that at a meeting of the Queenstown Urban District Council held on the 4th instant, a resolution was passed unanimously in favour of the purchase of Irish Railways by His Majesty's Government.

I am, Sir,

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) JAMES H. CAMPBELL,

Town Clerk.

The Right Hon. Augustine Burrell, K.C.,

Chief Secretary for Ireland,

Dublin.

VICEROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS,

13, ST. STEPHEN'S-GREEN, NORTH, DUBLIN,

19th October, 1907.

2286-07.

SIR,—Referring to your letter of the 9th instant, addressed to the Chief Secretary, I am directed to request that you will be good enough to furnish, for the information of the Viceroyal Commission, the terms of the Resolution, in favour of the State purchase of Irish Railways, adopted by the Urban District Council on the 4th *id.*

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) Geo. E. SHANAHAN,

Secretary.

J. H. Campbell, Esq., J.P.,

Town Clerk,

Queenstown.

SIR,—Referring to your letter (No. 2156) of the 29th inst., asking for a copy of the resolution passed by my Council in favour of the State purchase of Irish Railways, I beg to inform you that there was no written resolution handed in at the meeting of the Council held on the 4th instant, when the matter was dealt with. A member of the Council moved—"That we pass a resolution in favour of the State purchasing all the Irish Railways, and that the Chief Secretary for Ireland be informed of this by the Town Clerk." This resolution was duly seconded and declared passed unanimously.

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) JAMES H. CAMPBELL,

Town Clerk.

The Secretary,

Viceroyal Commission on Irish Railways,

Dublin.

II.

Resolution passed by the Newry Urban District Council on the 13th October, 1907.

Mr. PETER O'HAGAN, J.P., moved;

Mr. ROBERT LANE, seconded.

"That this Council desires to express its strong disapproval of the existing rates charged by the railway company; showing another strong reason for the purchase of the railways by the State."

III.

Letter from the Secretary of the Limerick Industrial Association, forwarding copy of a Resolution unanimously adopted by the All Ireland Industrial Conference, at Limerick, on the 22nd November, 1907.

LIMERICK INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION,

Limerick, 30th November, 1907.

George E. Shanahan, Esq.,

13 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

DEAR SIR,—I enclose you a copy of resolution unanimously adopted on Thursday at the All Ireland Industrial Conference. I would wish to emphasize the fact that the Conference was probably the most representative gathering of Irishmen which has ever been brought together to discuss the industrial, economic, and commercial development of the country. I am quite sure that the unanimous expression of opinion will receive consideration from the members of the Commission.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

(Signed) P. O'BRIEN,

Secretary.

Copy of Resolution to Secretary.

"That as a necessary condition for the industrial development of Ireland, this Conference is of opinion that the Irish railways should be unified without delay, either by purchase or other equitable means; if needful the purchase powers in the Acts establishing them being put in force, and that their future administration shall be under the control of a fully representative Irish authority."

Record Office Publications 3...

Salary :-

Admiralty Publications:

Local Government Board :—

Emigrants' Information Office, 41, Brixton Rd., London, S.W. 20.

Foreign Office.—

Board of Trade:

APPENDIX
TO THE
THIRD REPORT.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

Taken in Dublin and in London, 11th October to 16th November, 1907, (inclusive)

AND

DOCUMENTS RELATING THERETO.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty



DUBLIN

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